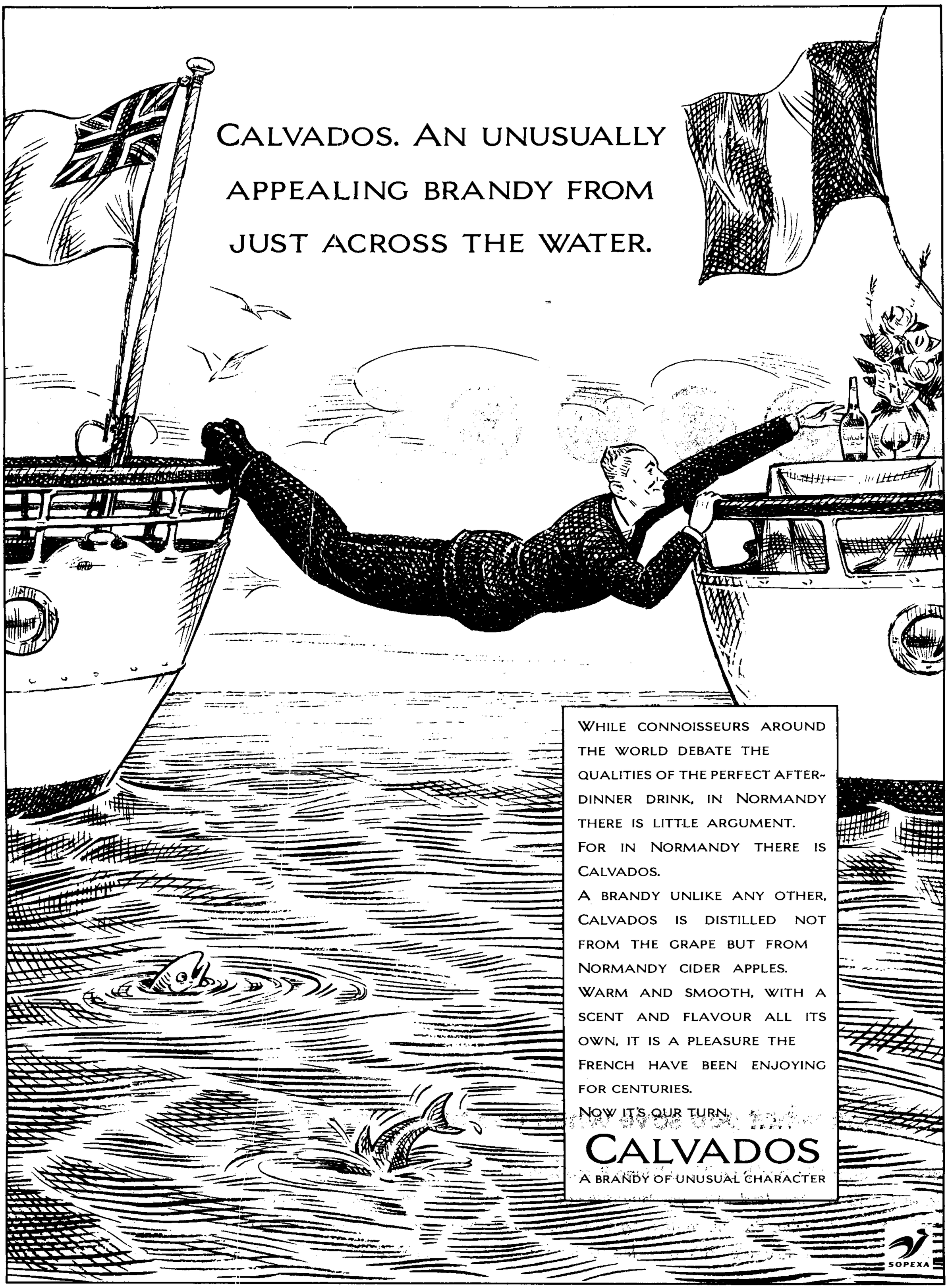
PRIVATE EYE

No. 779
Friday
25 Oct. '91

80p

THATCHER—NEW APOLOGY

CALVADOS. AN UNUSUALLY APPEALING BRANDY FROM JUST ACROSS THE WATER.



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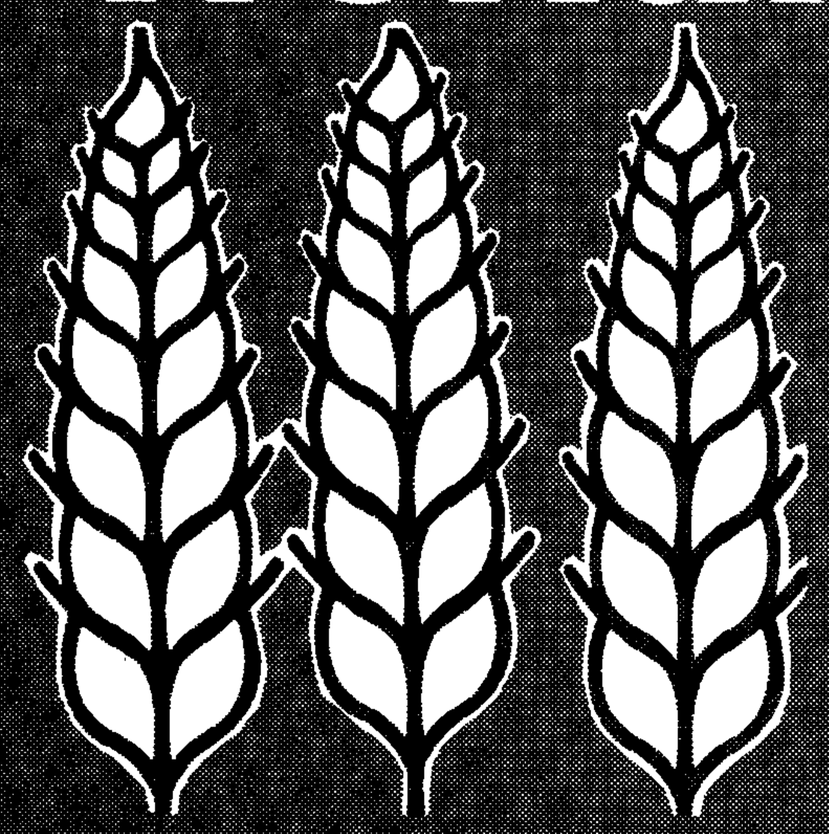

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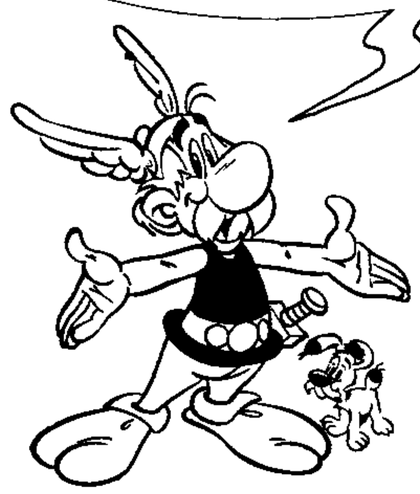

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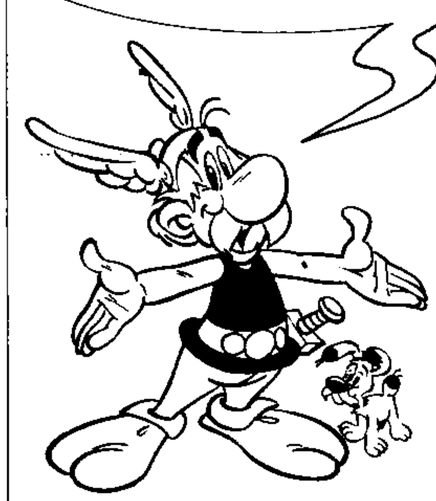

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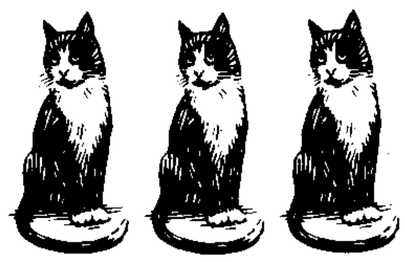
ME TOO.



At the last count, there was something in the region of one hundred and ninety Pilsner beers. All of them take their style from the original. Namely, Pilsner Urquell. Yes, other brewers do make beer similar to ours. But none of them make beer the way we do at the famous Pilsen brewery in Czechoslovakia. We single out the most fragrant female hops from the Zatec region of Czechoslovakia. These beautiful blossoms ensure a big, fresh bouquet. For a distinctive maltiness, we insist upon the finest two-rowed Bohemian barley. (Anything run-of-the-mill just won't do.) We only ever use water from the Pilsen spring. It has a natural alkaline quality that imparts a wonderful softness. Furthermore, our beer is matured for nearly four months in ancient pitch-lined oak vessels. The result is a uniquely hoppy brew with a flowery aroma and classic dry finish. So, may we suggest you always ensure your Pilsner is Pilsner Urquell. After all, who wants to be drinking a me-too, me-three, me-four, or me-one-hundred-and-ninety?

Pilsner Urquell

Gnome

An Apology

I OWE an apology to Mrs Thatcher for making public her apology to me.

In my anger and frustration at TV-Gnome losing the Eggcup franchise, I lost my head and revealed the contents of a private letter to the media.

I now realise that this personal apology should never have been splashed across the front pages and broadcast across the country. Quotes such as "It wasn't meant to be you", "I've really messed this up" and "What on earth is Carol going to do?" should have remained in the private domain.

I further accept that making the letter public was a shocking lapse of judgement and a betrayal of a long and valuable friendship. What made me come to my senses was the following letter from Mrs Thatcher which I reproduce in full:

Dear Gnome,

How ***dare*** *you suggest:*

a) I am ever wrong;

b) I ever use the word 'sorry'.

I was completely wrong about you. In fact I am sorry that I ever trusted you.

You are a treacherous scumbag who deserves to go bankrupt immediately.

Yours,
M. THATCHER,
c/o The Thatcher Foundation, Brunei

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pp Lord Gnome
TV-Gnome (decd.)
Eggcup House
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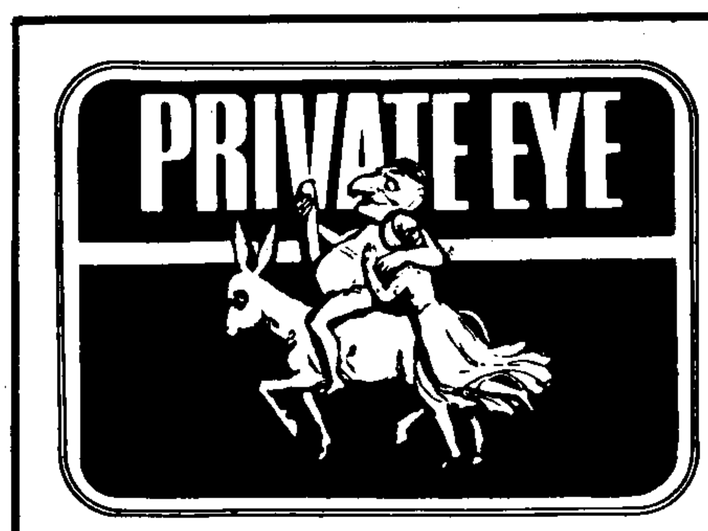


COLOUR SECTION

AN ASTONISHING affidavit has arrived at the *Eye* alleging in meticulous detail — and in line with the allegations made in the *Eye* over the past two years — that the Iran-Contra affair started in the office of George Bush.

The affidavit, supported by 25 pages of evidence, is written by a former prosecutor for the US Justice Department. It is a legal document, drafted as a witness statement to form part of a prosecution of any or all of the people named in it.

By comparing a long, unpublished 1987 statement of the late British CIA agent Leslie Aspin with the declassified records of the former White House staffman and right-wing nut Colonel Oliver North, the affidavit shows what has been argued in the *Eye* for many months: that the Irangate scandal started long before 1985 and that its nerve centre when it started was the office of George Bush, then vice-president.

The document demonstrates:

● In 1983, in an attempt to pre-empt the increase in anti-American terrorism in the Middle East, especially in Lebanon, vice-president Bush set up a special counter-terrorism group called the Senior Interagency Group.

● Bush's chief assistant Donald Gregg knew all about this group and helped to run it. Also associated with it was Robert L. Owen, a fanatically right-wing aide to a little-known right-wing Republican senator called Dan Quayle.

● In January 1984, on the direct orders of CIA director William Casey, CIA adventurer Colonel North was seconded to the new Bush group.

● The commander of the group was a seasoned CIA agent, William Buckley, who was duly posted to the Lebanon to lay the plans for the new counter-terrorism offensive. As so often, the brilliance of CIA intelligence was quickly made known to the Islamic fundamentalist terrorists, who, in March 1984, kidnapped Buckley and started to torture him.

● In June 1984, CIA chief William Casey recruited Leslie Aspin to the new Bush group. Aspin was a personal friend of Buckley. Casey asked Aspin to arrange the sale of TOW missiles, which had been sold from the US to Korea and were then waiting shipment in Portugal, to Iran, in exchange for freeing the hostages. Aspin at once started to cooperate with North, Owen and Gregg to set the deal in motion.

● In November 1984, Aspin and North opened three joint accounts in the BCCI in Paris. North deposited $5 million into them.

● The plan to rescue Buckley collapsed when he died under torture; but the liaison between Aspin and the conspirators survived. The scene shifted to Nicaragua.

● In early 1984, Owen moved from Washington to Central America where he helped to organise financial and military help for the Contras.

● Aspin, North and Co engaged the services of a Syrian-born arms deal, Monzer Al Kassar, to sell arms to Iran (and buy them elsewhere) to help the Contras. For this purpose, Aspin laundered $42 million through the BCCI accounts in the Cayman Islands. Al-Kassar was paid $1 million for his pains.

The sensational nature of this research is that it carries the Iran-Contra affair back from Ronald Reagan, where the buck has so far stopped, to George Bush. This may explain the fantastic effort by the entire US intelligence establishment to make sure that the full blame for Iran-Contra be taken by the already-discredited Reagan and that no blame at all should fall on his successor. The most effective document in this regard is the report of the Tower Commission into Iran-Contra, which hardly ever mentions Bush except to exculpate him.

The following appointments since made by President Bush may be relevant:

● Senator Tower, chairman of the Tower Commission, nominated by Bush for defence secretary.

● Brent Scowcroft, who, with Tower, made up a majority on the Tower Commission, appointed by Bush as national security adviser.

● Dan Quayle, obscure, imbecilic senator who employed Robert Owen, appointed by Bush as vice president.

● Robert Gates, Bush's friend in the CIA at the time of the conspiracy, who hid from his associates all his extensive knowledge of the Iran-Contra affair, nominated by Bush for CIA director, turned down once, but nominated by Bush again. Now at last the devious and unpopular Gates has taken up his post.

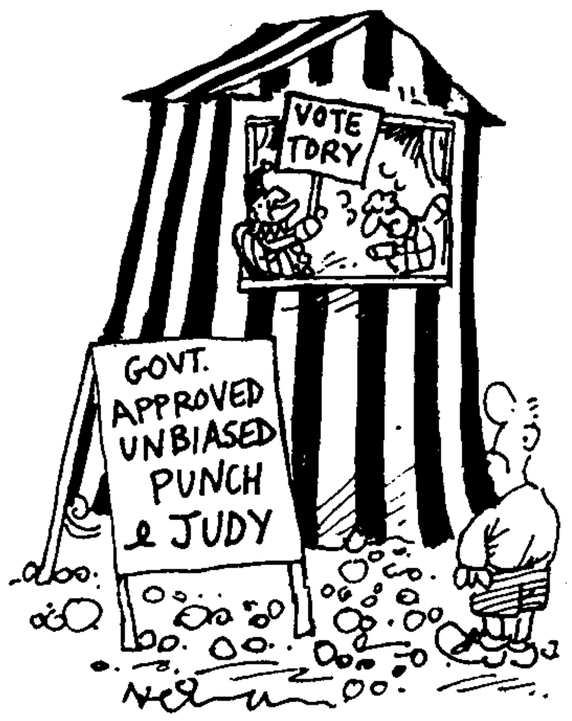
The other serious danger man for Bush was North, who was plainly guilty of lying, cheating, perjuring himself and destroying some of the evidence against him and who has now been let off all criminal charges on the grounds that he cannot receive a fair trial because, when he perjured himself, he appeared on television.

The wonderful "investigative" media in the United States, which stumbled on Irangate because the US government finally confessed to it, is unlikely to cause the president any lack of sleep over his Iran-Contra involvement. On the contrary. It now appears that ABC and CBS, whose crack teams started out to expose the Aspin-North connection, are now straining their formidable investigative powers (with no expense spared) to discredit it.

IT HAS emerged that opponents of the attempted Soviet coup in August had a far more potent military force on their side than the handful of tanks and special forces veterans who mustered around Boris Yeltsin at the White House in Moscow.

On the morning of the coup, the captain of a nuclear missile submarine sailed his vessel out of the Petrapavlovsk base on the Kamchatka peninsular and refused to return until the Gorbachev administration had been restored — the action of the captain and his crew clearly being in defiance of orders.

The admiral in charge of the Pacific fleet, Yuri Shamanin, supported the coup and is now on indefinite sick leave. And while the influence of this incident on the outcome of events can only be guessed at, a clue may lie in the captain's subsequent promotion to admiral.



THE MORNING after Sir Allan Green's resignation, the *Sun*'s front page had a huge headline: I'M THE TART. **A 23-year-old prostitute calling herself "Samantha of King's Cross" told the newspaper that "I lost the ******* Director of Public Prosecutions his job!" (Their asterisks.)**

On the front of the *Daily Mail* the same day, the headline was SIR ALLAN AND ME, BY THE VICE GIRL. Nicola Evans, 21, claimed that *she* was the tart Sir Allan had propositioned.

Clearly one of these stories was badly wrong — and *Sun* editor Kelvin Mackenzie soon discovered it was his. Cunning as ever, he set about trying to spoil his rival's scoop by telephoning the *Mail*'s easily shockable editor, Sir David Fester. "I think you ought to know," Kelvin cheerfully warned Fester, "that your tart is actually a man."

The horrified Fester was galvanised into action. His news editor, Ian "Mad" Monk, immediately contacted *Mail* hack Paul Henderson, who was "minding" the delightful Nicola at a hotel in the London suburbs, and ordered him to establish her gender. "I will do almost anything for the *Daily Mail*," replied Henderson, an amiable Cockney, "but I won't examine a tart's fanny."

Monk's next idea was to send for Dr Cope, the *Mail*'s company doctor. But "Cope the Grope" was unavailable. So the assignment was passed to hackette Tracey Harrison, who carried out a gynaecological survey on Nicola's pudenda and sounded the all-clear.

The editor and news editor still weren't happy. What if Nicola was a man who'd had a sex-change operation? Fortunately, it was the right time of the month: Harrison reported that she had personally witnessed one of the prostitute's blood-stained tampons.

Whereupon, belatedly, it occurred to Sir David Fester that perhaps Kelvin had been pulling his leg.

PATSY Chapman, editor of the *News of the Screws*, must be growing nervous of her close contacts with the police.

For a start she must be embarrassed by the decision of Kenneth Baker, Home Secretary, to send the case of Winston Silcott's conviction for the murder of PC Keith Blakelock in the Broadwater Farm riots back to the appeal court.

Baker had no choice as Silcott's alleged "confession" (it was not a confession at all, of course; but was make to look like one) was plainly added to his statement after he made it, as several tests. supervised by police officers, have now made plain).

Ms Chapman hopes no one remembers her recent front page pictures of PC Blakelock's uniforms, together with the usual guilty-looking pictures of Winston Silcott. She also hopes no one will point out that the uniform pictures were made available to her by friends of the police who convicted Silcott.

Nor will she want to be reminded of the Clare Short case in which another policeman — this time in the West Midlands — had provided the *News of the World* with "background" about Short's personal life, which the newspaper proudly used to denigrate her. Ms Chapman should be warned that it will soon be revealed in court that the copper who stole the secret information and flogged it to the *Screws* was also engaged in the heroic prosecution of the Birmingham Six.

These and other matters currently before the courts (and to be revealed by the *Eye* when they are concluded) might cause some readers to complain to the Press Complaints Commission. Be careful. One of its most experienced members is Patsy Chapman.

THE STAR of TV's Charles Moore continues to fall at the *Daily Torygraph* where he is, nominally at least, the deputy editor.

At a recent lunch given for John Major by the *Torygraph*'s editor, Max "Hitler" Hastings, Moore irritated the esteemed guest by first asking whether he thought a Labour government would be better for Britain and then by suggesting that the Government was completely wrong about Europe (ie not Thatcherite enough).

Moore has not hit it off with Major since he asked him in an interview during the Tory leadership contest whether he would give Mrs Thatcher a post in his cabinet.

"Hitler" Hastings was furious with Moore's recent lunch performance and has since discussed getting rid of him with proprietor Conrad Black. Moore has already been marginalised by the decision to take the running of the Op-ed page away from him and give it to Christopher Hudson.

Perhaps a career as a presenter on breakfast television, now that Sunrise has won the franchise, beckons for the hapless Thatcherite sycophant.

WHILE the *Grauniad* is once again to grace Downing Street "off-the-record" briefings with its impeccably concerned presence, few of its po-faced readers will know this: the decision was hidden on an inside page under the heading "Conservatives at Blackpool".

Five days later the marginally less boring *Independent* said the same, with three paragraphs on page three. But the *Grauniad* story included a somewhat dishonest claim by its editor, Peter Preston, who was quoted as saying that the rag had "alone, first" withdrawn from Bernard Ingham's briefings during the reign of Thatch.

In fact, the social worker's Bible only withdraw after the *Indie* had announced that it was not going to be spoonfed propaganda by the Thatch mouthpiece. In fact its hacks were merely spoonfed the propaganda by less scrupulous colleagues whom they grilled, and the *Grauniad* was "first" to withdraw only in the sense that *Indie* made its announcement before it had started publication.

Throughout the boycott period, the *Grauniad* said nothing about the attendance of its diplomatic correspondent, Hella Pick, at daily, off-the-record Foreign Office briefings which provide vast quantities of non-attributable "information" for delivery to the public as news. And nor has the *Indie* said if its diplomatic editor, Sarah Helm, does likewise.

Foreign Office briefings are even more insidious than Downing Street tip-offs because readers cannot check them from their own experiences and because hacks are briefed by diplomats who are often closely linked to the secret services.

RICHARD Williams, the sinister jazz fan who edits the *Sindie*'s Sunday Review, has once again confirmed his reputation as the most duplicitous man in Fleet Street.

Last month he reassured his columnist Maureen Freely, who had just returned from maternity leave, that her future was secure; now he has sacked her. This is quite in character. Earlier in the summer the *Sindie*'s arts editor, Michael Church, was sacked by Williams less than 24 hours after being promised that his job was safe.

During the merger crisis at the *Sindie* five months ago, Williams led his Sunday colleagues to believe that he was helping them fend off a takeover by the daily paper; they were none too pleased when they discovered that he was simultaneously in cahoots with Matthew Symonds, the man behind the takeover. And on 11 May, when *Sindie* hacks organised a petition urging Andreas Whittam Strobes to keep out of their affairs, Williams signed it — only to insist afterwards that his signature be struck off.

THE ONLY bright moment at the Tory party conference in Blackpool, one of the dullest in living memory, was the typically yobbish behaviour of the London "meejah" contingent.

Bruce "Brute" Anderson, the *Sunday Express*'s political "columnist", was in characteristically

"Bloody students!"

piggish form. Though his weekly scribblings more and more resemble Conservative Central Office handouts, he managed to disgrace himself twice.

On one occasion he was seen to goose Judy Hurd, wife of the Foreign Secretary, causing her to emit a blood-curdling shriek; and on another he roundly abused Thatcherite loyalist Christine Wall, who has lately resigned from the Central Office press office. "Brute", gallant as ever, assured her: "You're fucking dead, you're out, etc. etc."

The *Daily Torygraph*'s dismal party, meanwhile, was enlivened by the appearance of a gatecrasher: the rag's multimillionaire former chief executive, Andrew "Black" Knight. Rather than be flung out, a touching scene ensued in which he proceeded to kiss and make up with his former boss, Conrad Black, from whose clutches he had left on acrimonious terms some 18 months earlier.

Another remarkable vignette was played out at Blackpool North Station on the Friday morning, where a vast snaking queue of travellers were waiting for the train to Preston, including those wanting to make connections back to London.

Those in the queue were taken aback to see the *Express*'s knight and first lady, Sir Nick Lloyd and Lady Eve Bollard, also slumming it on public transport and arriving for the same purpose.

Lady Eve, editor of the *Sunday Express*, was resplendent in a check suit and sunglasses and strode purposefully to the front causing her husband to bellow: "You can't just jump the queue!" This caused La Bollard to turn haughtily on her heels and return to the back of the station hall where she belongs.

WITH a tremendous fanfare of self-righteousness, the *Sunday Times* last weekend published its "Charter Against Sexual Harassment".

Its aim was to protect women from "repeated innuendo or lewd comments, propositions or demands for sex", as well as "sexually suggestive gestures" and "leering".

How odd, then, that Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill recently appointed to a senior position on the *Sunset Times* a man for whom the charter seems to have been designed, Robin "Moron" Morgan.

During the 1980s, when Morgan was on the newspaper's Insight team, he continually pestered hackettes and secretaries with his leering sexual suggestions and more recently, during a brief sojourn as editor of the Spartist listings mag *City Limits*, crudely propositioned almost every "chick" in the building — including two who turned out to be separatist lesbians!

POOR old Pratt-Dumpster, dismal diarist of the *Daily Mail*. Not content with falling for a hoax himself — the celebrated Pamela Bordes-Richard Ingrams nonsense — he tried to hoax his own readers.

He announced in his diary that they would be welcome to the *Eye*'s 30th party, hoping that droves of *Daily Mail* readers would gate-crash the event. They didn't of course, being brighter than Pratt-Dumpster; but a number of them did telephone the venue of the party, the National Liberal Club, to check out his story.

There must be a moral in here somewhere, but it will be lost on Pratt-Dumpster. He listed the nearest Tube stations to the National Liberal Club as "Charing Cross, Westminster and Trafalgar Square" — the latter, of course, was closed down years ago. It is surely time for Humpty Dumpty to take the hint...

A HUGE SIGH of relief went up in Tory marginal constituencies when Micheal Heseltine triumphed over Malcolm Rifkind and the Government belatedly announced its preferred route for the Channel tunnel high-speed rail link.

To loud jeers from British Rail and Eurotunnel boss Sir Alastair Morton, Hezza's evironment team held sway over Riff-Raff's transport department as the latter was obliged to dump on BR and put his support behind the Stratford option.

The main purpose, of course, was the oft repeated need to save the Government from having to announce more disagreeable tidings just before a general election. For the moment, the heat is off in the marginal constituencies of south-east London, and after the next election there will be plenty of time for public inquiries and still more changes of heart.

However, even if the Stratford route does one day go ahead, it will still mean years of misery for wavering Tory voters. The blighted sections of south-east London will still be landed with four high speed trains an hour rattling through built-up districts to Waterloo as they compete for space with commuter trains on an overcrowded network, and there will still be night time freight trains.

Two routes will be under threat: through Peckham or through Dulwich Village and Herne Hill. British Rail says where the trains will go will only be decided when it gets down to the detailed design stage. But for the present, Hezza has relieved pre-election pressure — and politics, after all, is only about keeping the other lot out.

AS PREDICTED in the *Eye*, the decision not to call an election in November has been followed by a huge vote-catching effort at Tory Central Office.

Party lackeys want to pile on to the British voting register as many names as possible from people who do not live in Britain, have no intention of living in Britain and thus won't be affected by any laws passed by a British parliament, but who might want to vote Tory nevertheless.

Grey envelopes have been pouring out (mysteriously postmarked "Brussels") to expats around the world who have been away from Britain for up to 20 years. Each potential voter has been sent three registration forms and is begged by the Tories to find two Tory friends to fill in the spare ones. The deadline, the letters say, was 10 October, but the authorities, it seems, will accept any form dated before 10 October, even if sent or received later.

With the forms go special Tory Party leaflets calling on the voters to appoint proxies. All they have to do is sign the leaflets, and a proxy will be found for them. It can only be hoped that the hard-pressed electoral authorities will be able to check the place where the proxy votes against the so-called "registration address" sent in by the expat voter. The difficulty of making such a check might make it rather easy for Tory Central Office to send in proxy voters to marginal seats, even where the expat voters give an address in a safe seat. By mistake, of course.

WHEN the real history of the Thatcher years comes to be written, one of the worst as yet unrevealed scandals will be the Great Pensions Robbery.

In a series of laws, Thatch and Co permitted employers to dig their fingers deep into their workers' pension schemes, a typical example being that of the privatised British Steel.

In April, it announced a vast surplus on its pension scheme of £592 million. British Steel promptly swiped half the surplus to "offset ongoing costs" while the other half was used almost entirely to improve benefits for 52,000 existing employees, leaving 200,000 needy pensioners (apart from widows who received an extra 10 per cent) with absolutely nothing extra to show for the enormous surplus.

The reasoning of the caring, sharing British Steel appears to be that its retired workers can go whistle in the wind — after all, they can't go on strike — but that existing workers might be persuaded by "concessions" on pensions to accept lower pay increases.

This is of course is nothing less than daylight robbery of people who contributed all their working lives to the pension scheme and whose payments have been responsible for the surplus. But when a protest campaign started, it was found that it had all been made legal by successive Thatcher governments.

HAVING won his libel case against the *Sunday Times*, northern media tycoon Owen Oyston is turning his attention to a "secret investigation into my affairs" in which, he claims, several prominent Tories were involved (see last *Eye*). They include two Lancashire MPs, Robert Atkins and Sir Peter Blaker.

In the middle of this extraordinary feud is one Michael Murrin, a former fish-and-chip shop owner from Preston. He has now revealed that he was first hired to dig for dirt on Oyston more than 10 years ago by Bill Harrison, a Tory millionaire whose house outside Preston was used by Mrs Thatcher as a helicopter base during Conservative party conferences at Blackpool. Harrison said last week that he had offered Murrin "help in his inquiries" into Oyston, but added: "I did nothing that was illegal."

The Tory mogul's grudge against Oyston dates back to the mid-1970s, when local newspapers discovered that the chief constable of Lancashire, Stanley Parr, had personally intervened in the police prosecution of Harrison's daughter, Janette, who had driven her car on to a pavement and killed two women. The original charge — causing death by dangerous driving — was reduced by Parr to the lesser one of driving without due care and attention. Following a campaign in the *Lancashire Evening Post*, an official inquiry concluded that the chief constable had misused his position to show favour. Harrison became convinced — quite wrongly — that Oyston, as a leading advertiser in the *LEP*, had influenced the paper's coverage of the case. Soon afterwards, Harrison began to fund Murrin's investigation into Oyston's affairs.

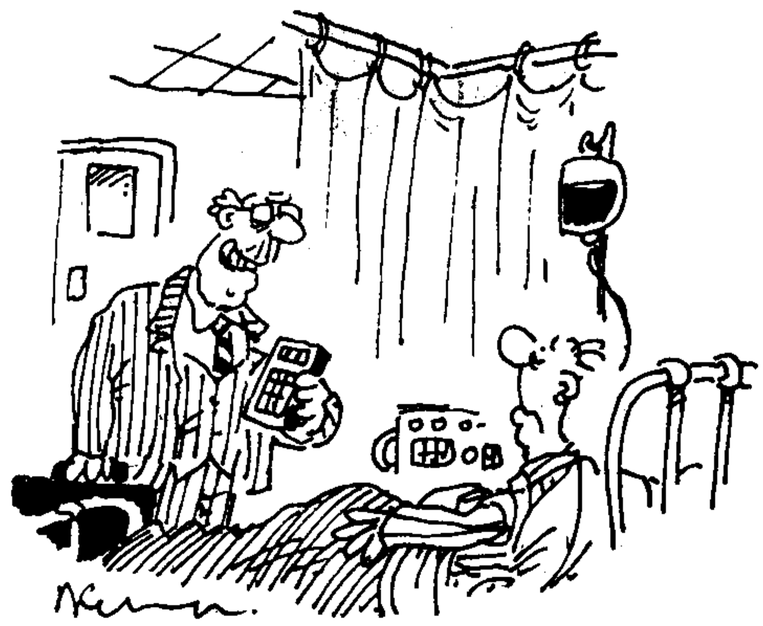
Meanwhile, Michael Murrin has had an amazing switch of allegiance. He was originally hired by Bill Harrison to pursue Owen Oyston because of his passionate hostility to the local Labour Party and its millionaire benefactor. In the course of his sleuthing he obtained Oyston's personal bank accounts, income tax disclosures, sensitive company memos and private letters. But after being successfully sued by Oyston last year — and then nearly forced into bankruptcy — Murrin was invited, with his wife and children, to Claughton Hall, Lancaster, the tycoon's palatial residence, where a convivial time was had by all. Since then, Murrin has been busily transcribing the 40 tapes of his conversations with his backers and informants — including Bill Harrison and Sir Peter Blaker MP. It is believed that Oyston may use these transcripts as evidence in future lawsuits.

Copies of the transcripts, some of which have been seen by the *Eye*, show that Murrin spoke regularly to Blaker, whose cable TV interests in Preston at one time clashed with those of Oyston. They also suggest that Murrin may have been in touch with another senior Tory, David Waddington, who is now leader of the House of Lords but was then Home Secretary.

"Say nothing about seeing Waddington," Blaker says to Murrin on the tape, "until you've seen Waddington. Er, I think what you'll find with him is that if you see him and talk to him, you could if you like write to him a letter in advance and say I wish to see you on such-and-such a date, I'm glad to know an appointment has been made, the subject is information which I possess about municipal malpractice in the, in local government in Lancashire and Preston, something like that. If you make it Preston it will make it clear that it's Labour."

Sir Peter Blaker MP and Robert Atkins MP have now announced that they will be "very happy to cooperate fully" with any police inquiry.

This affair could yet have national significance, especially in the run-up to a general election. Besides being the sports minister, cricket-mad Robert Atkins is John Major's closest friend in Parliament. Owen Oyston is equally well-connected on the Labour side; he and his wife Vicki, a former Miss Blackpool, accompanied Neil and Glenys Kinnock on their Tuscan holiday last year.



"I'm not Dr Jekyll – I'm Mr Hyde the accountant"

CLARE SHORT'S desperate fight for her seat in Ladywood, Birmingham, has swung her way thanks to a leaked report showing massive corruption and incompetence in the organisation run by her main challenger.

Sardul Marwa, a former city councillor, was being sponsored by the electricians union, the EETPU, to oust Short in the constituency Labour party's forthcoming reselection as revenge for her forcing a national inquiry against its candidate in neighbouring Small Heath, Roger Godsiff (see *Eyes passim*).

It had used a loophole in the party rulebook — creating 17 union branches in Ladywood in the last year, each entitled to a seat on the selection committee. But as in Small Heath the union has ruined its planning with an appalling choice of candidate.

Marwa runs the Handsworth Opportunities Project for Employment (Hope), a training scheme set up after the 1985 Handsworth riots. HOPE receives hundreds of thousands of pounds from the city council — which recently grew suspicious and sent in auditors.

Their report, sent to the *Eye*, shows that Hope has spent £300,000 renovating its rented headquarters which it was eventually supposed to buy. That will never happen because Marwa "forgot" to commit to paper a verbal agreement with the landlord, who lives near Marwa and is evicting Hope and selling the vastly more valuable building.

The auditors also question the cost of the renovation, which they valued at just £86,000. Marwa has been asked to explain where all the materials ordered actually went. They also quizzed Marwa over his eccentric use of petty cash to pay cleaners' wages without tax or national insurance deductions.

He also, says the report, used city money to make interest free loans to his own staff — a contravention of all grant conditions.

What the auditors have not disclosed is how Hope employees used its vehicles and materials to help run the local Labour Party. They may also be interested in the conversion of a room at the project HQ into a blue movie cinema and drinking den.

While Birmingham council's right-wing Labour leaders would love Deirdre Short to be ousted — which is why the report was being kept under wraps until the reselection was over — that now seems a forlorn hope.

'Backbiter'

Frank Johnson

ON 26 April we referred to the ridiculous claims which had been circulating in certain quarters that John Major had a mistress.

The suggestion that Frank Johnson of the *Sunday Telegraph* was eager for *Private Eye* to disclose the identity of the alleged mistress of the Prime Minister was entirely without foundation. Mr Johnson believes that our item further implied that he wished to discover the name of the alleged mistress in order to publicise it and thereby sully the name of the Prime Minister. Such an implication would be baseless and was not intended. We apologise to Mr Johnson for any embarrassment caused by our piece.

TO THE Viking Hotel, York, where at short notice I have been asked to address a conference entitled "Working for Justice", organised by the Criminal Law Solicitors' Association.

My hosts tell me I am filling the gap left by Sir Allan Green QC who — as they put it — "pulled out at the last minute".

His absence is much regretted: he was to have spoken on the "the Crown Prosecution Service's relationship with the police": a subject on which Sir Allan is surely the greatest living expert.

● *READING of the recent activities of the Serious Fraud Office, I am reminded of a luncheon I attended in September at Dorneywood, official country residence of Home Secretary Kenneth Baker.*

Apart from myself, other luminaries present included the Prime Minister, John Major, and the conversation concerned the prospects for a November election. (Indeed, the press ran lobby stories the next day saying Baker had recommended Major to go for November; but I digress.)

At one point during the meal an Asian businessman handed me his card. I thought nothing more of this until I read how the Serious Fraud Office had mounted a dawn raid on the business premises and home of one Nazmudin Virani, chairman and chief executive of Control Securities, as part of its investigation into the BCCI scandal.

Retrieving the card from the pocket of my suit, I reflect upon the rum nature of guests who these days are to be found at the lunches of Tory ministers and prime ministers.

I DID SO enjoy the conference on censorship that was held in Newcastle two weeks ago, sponsored by *New Statesman and Society*.

The undisputed star of the event was former porn queen Annie Sprinkle, who, when asked by an earnest Statesperson for her views on free speech, replied: "I don't know anything about politics but I'm rather good at boob-painting" — whereupon she stripped off and gave a demonstration.

At another conference session Sprinkle encouraged delegates to climb on to the stage and inspect her cervix with a speculum and torch. Simulated oral sex followed, with Annie claiming to have reached orgasm on stage while the liberal-minded conference-goers made catcalls and wolf-whistles, beating their legs with rolled-up copies of the *New Staggers*.

Another keynote speaker was an American artist who, to the background of Ravel's *Bolero*, recited a dirty poem on "the joys of unsafe homosexual sex". This seems slightly at odds with the safe-sex philosophy of the *New Statesman*, whose chairman is the litigious AIDS campaigner Duncan "Dunky" Campbell.

Pseuds Corner

Miles Davis, 1926-91

Miles is dead.

An implausible phrase but one he might have played himself: it's brief, unsentimental, severe, unfathomable, beautiful. It brooks no scrutiny. You take it as you find it. Davis is monumental in death as he was in life.

Time Out

What people do not realise is that Trotsky was a passionate foxhunter, so was Engels. There is a long history of socialist foxhunting.

ANN MALLALIEU
Counsel magazine

The second of these built-to-order projectiles was entrusted to me. Bearing in mind the philosophy behind the RML GT40's creation — "We were determined to build a racing car that would be able to travel on public roads," says Ray Mallock — it would have been reasonable to settle for nothing more ambitious than a few laps of Silverstone sandwiched between brief, there-and-back drives.

I decided to take the "travel on public roads" to heart by retracing a journey undertaken in 1188 by Gerald de Barri, the Archdeacon of St David's who became known as Giraldus Cambrensis or Gerald of Wales. The impressions recorded by that tall, opinionated priest in *The Journey Through Wales* and *The Description of Wales* were distilled from raw material gathered while accompanying the Archbishop of Canterbury on a journey to raise support for the Third Crusade.

PHIL LLEWELLIN
Independent

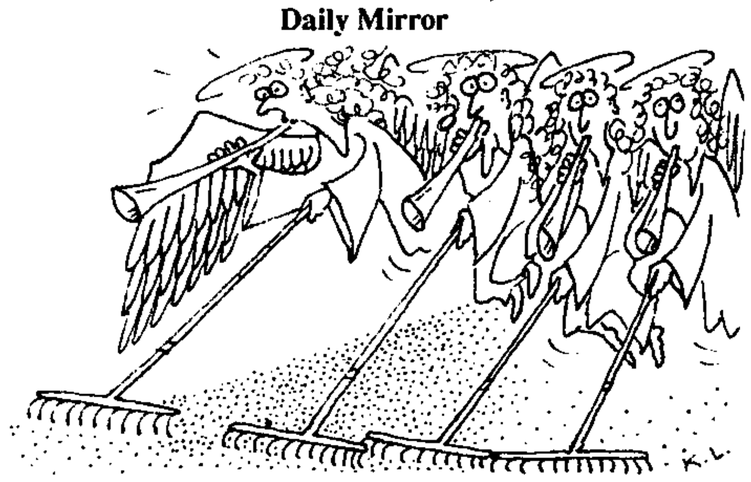
The Lloyd's headquarters in the City of London, completed in 1986, is [Sir Richard] Rogers's landmark building. On a glorious October morning, it is the dazzling bride of Hi-Tech design. Dressed from street to sky in Rogers's version of Paco Rabanne or Jean-Paul Gaultier, this is Modern architecture at its sexiest and most scintillating.

JONATHAN GLANCEY
Independent

When two men do such damage to each other, they forge a bond that is totally private.

Their words and thoughts are only for each other's eyes and ears.

IAN GIBB (on Chris Eubank and Michael Watson)
Daily Mirror



The beach was far flatter than any pancake that I had ever seen and as smooth as a celestial long jump pit which has been constantly raked flat by all four archangels. Indeed it was so smooth that I was impelled by the brutish instinct which Robert Falcon Scott used to illustrate and justify his passion for polar exploration. I wanted — perhaps I needed — to make my mark where no marks had been before.

ROY HATTERSLEY
Guardian

CONTRIBUTORS: Nick Hunt, Nick Economakis, Edwin Rose, Anon, John McCroskie, Anne Edmonds.

£10 paid for entries

THE sinister Canadian press baron Conrad Black is busy buying up newspapers in Australia at the moment. But I am delighted to see he can still find time for the important things in life — such as sucking up to the British royal family.

Now, I hear, he has sent a memo to the *Telegraph*'s literary editor, John Coldstream, ordering him to commission a favourable review of the new book by HRH Fergiana, Duchess of York — or else. This is no easy task, since fans of the Duchess's prose style are thin on the ground. Any of my readers who feel they might be able to bring themselves to praise Fergie's new tome about Queen Victoria and Osborne House (which in any case has been largely ghost-written by a certain Benita Stoney) are urged to contact the newspaper forthwith.

I FEAR Robert Maxwell's decision to hold a "lavish" launch party for the *European* in New York this month was perhaps taken too literally by the fat man's son, Ian, who agreed that a party of hacks could fly over to the junket in Concorde. When Cap'n Bob heard of this extravagance, he demanded it be stopped at once.

At Heathrow, an elderly Mrs Lewis was settling into her Concorde seat when suddenly two British Airways officials unceremoniously ejected her, saying: "Mr Maxwell doesn't want you on this plane." When the lady protested that she had never heard of Mr Maxwell, a hack called Russell Lewis sheepishly identified himself and was ejected in her stead.

Those of us who did make it to New York were most impressed to note that UN secretary-general Perez de Cuellar, who was "too busy" to see a Kurdish group appealing for help, spent an hour enjoying the hospitality of Cap'n Bob, whose unctuous talk about human rights made many partygoers regurgitate their caviar and chateaubriand.

But the two men have a lot in common: the United Nations, like the *European*, is only kept afloat with borrowed money.

I WAS GREATLY tickled by the performance of ageing lothario Cecil Parkinson, guest speaker at a meeting of the Guernsey International Legal Association earlier this month.

He had been engaged to speak on Europe, the single market and its consequences for the Channel Islands — a subject no one in the Conservative Party should discuss in public so close to an election, and especially not Cecil.

"I've been on to the Foreign Office and I've scoured the House of Commons Library," began the great man, "and I can sum up the entire subject in a few words — 'nobody has a clue'. I have decided, therefore, to amend the contents of my speech and will talk to you about my life in politics."

Astonished delegates were then subjected to an hour-long dirge about how he helped to build the great society that Britain is today. Several of the audience were distinctly unimpressed and by the end of the evening had dubbed the old bore "Torchy" for being so "ever-ready".

Easily the most revealing incident was the question and answer session that followed his speech. What did he think would be the future of the House of Lords? With one eye on the inevitable peerage, Cecil embarked on a vigorous defence of the system. "Besides," he finished, "none of the hereditary members ever exercise their voting rights anyway."

To barely suppressed guffaws and looks of stunned incredulity, Cecil beamed his toothy, imperturbable smile.

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

AS WE ALL know, the listing of historic buildings is a fraught business as it can so upset owners who might wish to demolish or redevelop them. In consequence, the occasional "de-listing" or "downgrading" of the listing of certain buildings by the Department of the Environment tends to give rise to wicked unsubstantiated accusations of political interference in the process.

The fact is, of course, that DoE officials simply hate the very idea of doing what English Heritage advises and their natural civil service instinct is to diminish the number of historic buildings worthy of protection.

So here is a curious thing: a rare example of official reluctance to de-list and downgrade some long-established listed buildings. These are at Kelvedon Hall, Essex, a big and rather dull Georgian country house which, in 1938, was bought by that ineffable American snob, social climber and diarist, Sir Henry Channon MP, better known as "Chips" Channon.

Chips made various alterations and additions to the house using the architects Wellesley & Wills, that is, Lord Gerald Wellesley, subsequently the Duke of Wellington and better known as the "Iron Duchess". Kelvedon Hall was statutorily listed as of architectural and historical interest in 1952 and after 1967 both the hall and its stable block were listed Grade I, while the 1938 neo-Georgian entrance lodge was listed Grade II.

In 1989 Brentwood district, in which Kelvedon is situated, was re-surveyed as part of the "accelerated re-survey" of listed buildings initiated by Michael Heseltine as environment secretary. After inspecting the property, the field survey office concerned advised that Kelvedon Hall was simply

not of Grade I quality because of its Victorian alterations and that it should be listed instead at Grade II. He also recommended that the stable block should be down-graded from Grade I to Grade II and that the entrance arch with twin lodges should be de-listed as it did not meet the strict criteria laid down for listing buildings of 1914-1939, in which "the very highest standards must be applied and selection must be strictly within a national context".

Fair enough, perhaps — for while I should hate to see the Iron Duchess's nice little lodge demolished, it is scarcely as significant, or as representative, as many 1930s buildings proposed in vain for listing by the officers of English Heritage or by, say, the Thirties Society. But what was odd in this case was that a long delay ensued and that Peter White, the then head of listing, eventually announced that nothing would be changed except that the stable block would be downgraded. The explanation for this unaccountable rejection of the field survey officer's recommendations was simply: "It is not a matter of what they are, but whose they are."

And whose are they? Why, Kelvedon belongs to Chips's son, Paul Channon, Conservative MP and failed cabinet minister, who, clearly, cannot tolerate official recognition that his inherited country seat may not be quite top-notch.

I suppose this touching anxiety to keep up standards makes a refreshing change from other former cabinet ministers like Francis Pym, who tried to demolish his ancestral home. But it does rather give the lie to the quaint notion that there is no political interference in the listing process.

TALKING of political interference, my mind naturally turns to the apparent impunity with which our Conservative Government's friends from abroad treat great houses like Heveningham and Burley-on-the-Hill, as I discussed in the last Eye.

Not that discussion is welcome. On 1 October, Marcus Binney wrote much more in The Times about the strange way in which the Burley estate has been sold to Mr Asil Nadir's friend, Mr Ramadan Güney, gazumping Mr Kit Martin, who wished to rescue the house. But most readers will not have seen this article as it only appeared in northern and Scottish editions. Rum, that.

But we must not think that only these two great houses are at risk from the government-approved Islamicisation of our heritage. I should also have mentioned Dropmore House, Buckinghamshire, the late 18th century house built by prime minister Grenville and recently bought, as one of his many architectural toys, by Mr Mahdi Al Tajir. Two years ago, a fire destroyed most of the superb additions made to the house by Tatham. These have now been demolished. Dare I say it all sounds uncomfortably reminiscent of Heveningham?

Mr Al Tajir also owns Mereworth Castle, the work of Colen Campbell and one of the most important Palladian houses in Britain. Now, I suppose one cannot object to great houses falling into such ownership; but the trouble is that they then tend to become completely inaccessible while their interiors are completely transformed in accordance with un-historical and very un-English taste. Should the rights of property reign supreme in modern Britain? Surely the very system of listed building legislation suggests otherwise?

'Piloti'

SPARTS AND SPARTSPERSONS

IF THE Daves and Deirdres of the anarchist group Class War are the vanguard of the revolution, plans for erecting the barricades will have to be postponed indefinitely. Their performance at their recent "International Conference" in north London was, er, basically very totally and utterly pisspoor.

The event — which organisers claim was attended by 500 anarchists from 15 countries — ended in chaos after British National Party supporters hospitalised a number of "delegates".

The fascist attacks took place away from the conference venue, but did not help to lower the temperature of a gathering that was already fired up with the prospect of capitalism's imminent demise and the establishment of something... er... totally and utterly different.

During the tired and emotional evening session, someone grabbed the mic and appealed to "everyone willing to fight" to "get outside, now!" Somewhat the worse for wear, the class warriors piled out to find themselves confronted by just four cro-magnon BNPers — dozens of yards away and mounting an utterly ineffectual bottle barrage — and by several van loads of riot police.

Udo Fischer, a conference "steward", was later arrested carrying a CS gas cannister and a length of piping. He has pleaded guilty to offensive weapons charges amid allegations that the organisers handed out weapons to those willing to "defend" the conference. The magistrate due to sentence Mr Fischer will doubtless look more leniently upon his case owing to the 4ft-high fluorescent graffito "Free Udo — Class War" that now adorns Old Street Magistrates' Court.

POP EYE

THE baggy-trousered Manchester pop craze can now be officially consigned to the dustbin of history, much to the delight of the serious, London-based rockerati.

Eye readers will recall how the Madchester scene, brainchild of Granada TV presenter Tony Wislon, nearly evaporated earlier this year when its chic shrine, the Hacienda nightclub (owned by Wislon and pompously cited by Mancunians as the best in the world) was closed down on the advice of Inspector Knacker after the local underworld had overrun it.

Now it transpires that the two-day, Wislon-inspired Woodstock-style jamboree in Manchester's Heaton Park last August lost an astonishing £120,000, despite massive hype by the psychedelic *Manchester Evening News*.

The promoters, Park Productions UK, boasted that the park would be rocked by 40,000 gyrating punters, but only 14,000 turned up (about the number that watch Oldham Athletic) and on one of the hottest Saturdays of the year. The rest of the site was taken up with the substantial frame of the gig's failed impresario Alan Wise, a man never forgiven by right-on Mancunians for organising strippers at a Hacienda Christmas party.

Those who mistakenly provided services for the festival are now lining up to lynch Mr Wise. They include a Bristol-based company which provided lighting and 200 toilets and is owed £20,000; Manchester city council which hasn't received its £20,000 for loaning the park; Fac 51 Productions (part of the Wislon empire) which wants £14,000 for providing a mile of security fencing; and a coterie of lesser lights.

POLICE 5

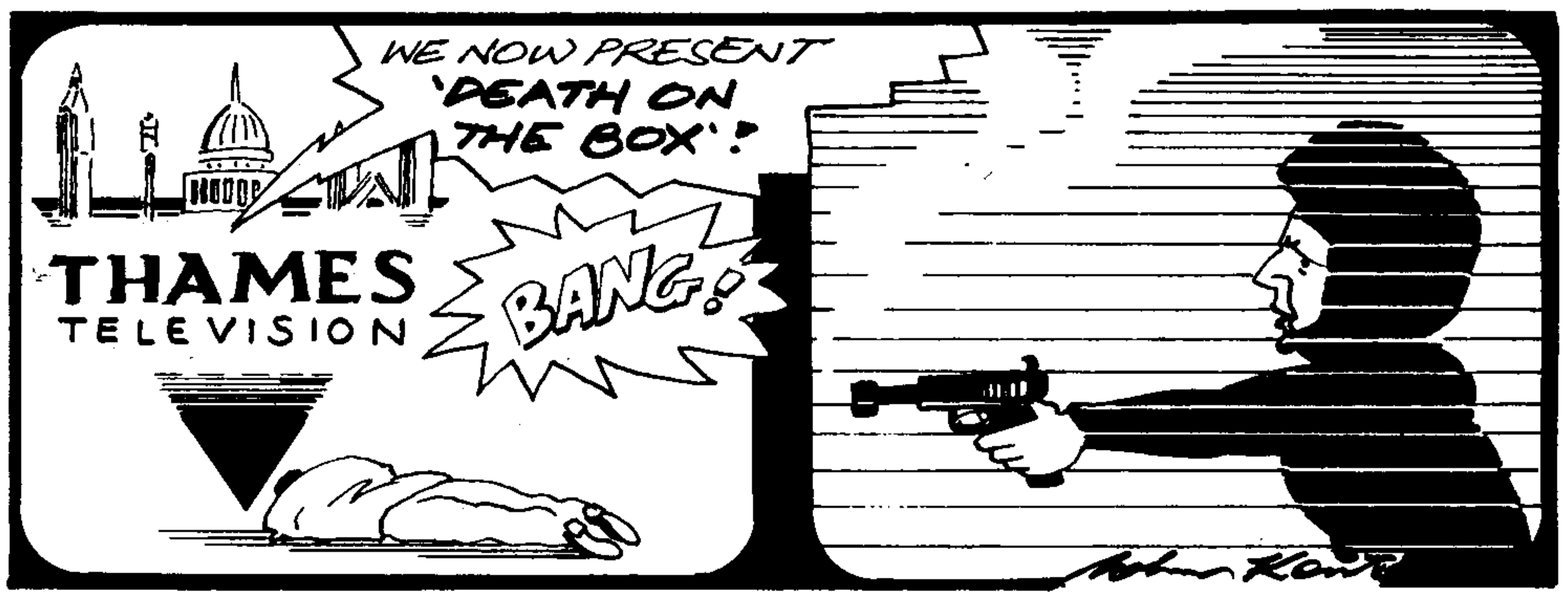
POOR old chief superintendent Bernard Taffe, Hackney's top cop, doesn't have an easy job. But the past few weeks have been particularly tough.

Calls for his resignation and for a public inquiry into the borough's policing have been made by the Hackney Community Defence Association — a local police watchdog — following the announcement that two men cleared of attacking five police constables plan to sue for assault and wrongful arrest.

A jury at the Inner London Crown Court recently took just 15 minutes to acquit Michael Lavery and Geoffrey Eaton of actual and grievous bodily harm against the five officers, after hearing two bystanders describe how police had repeatedly beaten both men as they lay handcuffed and face down in the road. Doctors who examined them found nearly 40 injuries, including head wounds apparently caused by a truncheon.

If the men's action is successful, their damages — which could run into tens of thousands of pounds — will add to the swelling bill which the capital's groaning poll taxpayers foot each year to pay off the victims of the Met's new "positive approach" to policing.

EYE TV



Franchise Watch: The Final Verdict

MARGARET Thatcher's letter of apology to TV-am weirdo Bruce Gyngell — expressing astonishment at the loss of his ITV franchise to a higher bidder (a system she invented) — must, among condolence notes, rank alongside the IRA's expressions of regret at accidentally killing the wrong people in terrorist attacks.

Built to her own blueprint, partly and hastily sanitised after her departure by saner colleagues, the franchise sell-off finally turned out precisely in her own image: divisive, illogical, them-and-us, upsetting everybody.

The ITC, in conducting the sale, should be given some credit for at least subverting the original Thatcher/Lawson intention that a blind bid system would rocket the Treasury's profits from ITV. Using the "quality threshold", forced past a reluctant government, George Russell and his fellow quangettes have kept the surplus trickle into Lamont's pockets to the minimum. Even so, their decisions raise a number of important questions.

How Did Granada Survive? The implausible decision to fail Phil Redmond's rich and prestigiously-staffed North-West television bid at the "quality threshold" stage — thus allowing Granada victory with a much lower bid — raises the overpowering stench of special pleading. It seems likely that the ITC took the early decision that Granada, the Queen Mother of the commercial system, was untouchable. Therefore, Redmond fell victim to the little-publicised "No long-haired Liverpudlians called Phil" clause in the bid regulations.

How Did LWT Survive? Well, partly, it is true, because its rival LIB was a rather shabby outfit (LIB now seems to have been short for libido, as top executive Tom Gutteridge and top presenter Anneka Rice are reported to have enjoyed a short Ugandan holiday together). But it is also now apparent that many of the licence bidders made the mistake of thinking that each regional area would be considered separately. It is now apparent that there was a chain in operation: once Thames (in the seat by the door ever since its brave *Death On The Rock*) had been despatched, LWT was safe, as the removal of both London companies would have brought dangerous instability to a hugely lucrative region.

How Did Central Avoid Rival Bids? Although Central's securing of its licence for only £2,000 per annum is a witty and legitimate rebuke to the Government's grubby hunger for money from the process, the question remains of how the company could be so certain that its comic cash bid would be unopposed? It isn't possible, is it, that rather more than £2,000 was spent on lucrative commissions to independent producers and would-be telly barons muttering in the salons of Nottingham and Brum about the possibility of a bid for Central's licence?

And why were the media press so convinced that the East Midlands Electricity Board were continuing with their plans to challenge Central long after the board had abandoned its plans?

How come the Breakfast Bids were so close? Daybreak TV bid £33.3 million for the TV-am franchise, which was won by Sunrise TV with a bid of £34.61 million (TV-am's bid was *£20 million* less than this).

Coincidence? Some of the Daybreak consortium (ITN, Daily Telegraph, Carlton) think not and are pointing their fingers at each other for *leaking* the Daybreak bid to Sunrise.

How The Hell Will Sunrise Pay The Treasury? Whatever your feelings about Mike Morris as a presenter, TV-am has reason to feel aggrieved about losing to a company — Sunrise — which makes the illogical promise to go upmarket and yet still pay the Treasury £35 million per year: £20 million more than Bruce Gyngell felt able to offer from the vast profits made by his downmarket operation. How will Sunrise make such cash?

Unless this question had been adequately addressed by Russell and the ITC quangettes, Mrs Thatcher could be spending a lot of time in the next few years on another bunch of sorry letters.

Programme Postscript: People Today (BBC1)

HOSTED by Miriam Stoppard and Adrian Mills, *People Today* is the BBC's latest answer to the coffee-break primacy of ITV's *This Morning*, co-hosted by Richard Madeley and his wife Judy Finnigan.

Miriam and Adrian perch uneasily on a sofa reading links like "Our next guest is known as the Randy Granny" and "Do *you* always stumble on the road to true Romance?"

But the crap de la crap is the Friday feature "Dempster's Friends" in which (Adrian and Miriam read) "top gossip guru Nigel Dempster gives an insight into the lives of the rich and famous."

Dumpster had unwisely promised in advance that his unique contacts with the lofty would produce unusually frank responses. Princess Michael of Kent was the first into the hot seat. What would the Dumpster Inquisition throw at her?

"Where do you get your books?" you heard him saying. This was impressive: plagiarism mentioned straight away. It was only when Princess Himmler started frothing about skin and height and eyes that you realised Dumpster had actually said: "Where do you get your looks?", his sloppy Australian diphthongs leading to the confusion.

"You cunt," he replied. This was astonishing. Here, clearly was an interviewer clearly not content to brown-nose princesses. Princess Himmler talked about horses. You realised that Dumpster had, in fact, said "You hunt?" But perhaps he was just building up the stuff about Nazis and plagiarism. He wasn't. Princess Himmler revealed that her son was beginning to be interested in girls. "I would think they'd be very interested in him — he's a very handsome young man," probed Dumpster.

At least, after the retirement of Alastair Burnett, there should be a more plentiful supply of the wire tongue-brushes necessary for cleaning up after such interviews. And thank God for the BBC that no "quality threshold" applies to them.

'Square Eyes'

I-BSkyB

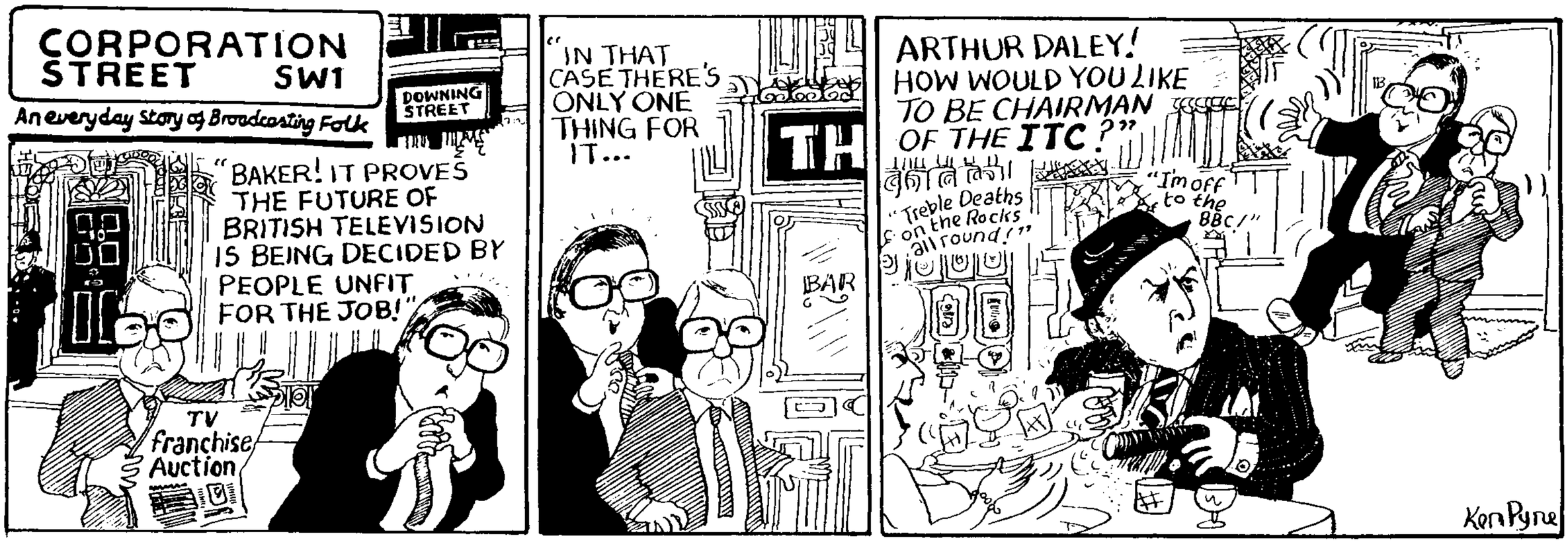
SKY Television is launching a sensational bid to screen The Bill after the top police show's makers Thames were axed yesterday in Britain's biggest telly shake-up.

The move by the satellite station came within hours of the announcement that four major TV companies had lost their licences to go on broadcasting.

Sun front page

CONTRIBUTOR: Anon.

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.


CORPORATION STREET SW1
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
DOWNING STREET
"BAKER! IT PROVES THE FUTURE OF BRITISH TELEVISION IS BEING DECIDED BY PEOPLE UNFIT FOR THE JOB!"
TV franchise Auction
"IN THAT CASE THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT...
BAR
ARTHUR DALEY! HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE ITC?"
"Treble Deaths on the Rocks all round!"
"I'm off to the BBC!"
Ken Pyne

MEDIA NEWS

WHAT ON earth is going on in the teeming brain of Will Wyatt, managing director of BBC Television?

This question was asked by several senior producers and executives whom he summoned to a forward-planning meeting last Thursday. He told the assembled *apparatchiks* that in future the corporation must provide "marquee programming".

Registering their blank looks, he attempted to elucidate this curious new phrase. "Marquee programmes", he explained, were "non-peripheral".

WHENEVER prostitution hits the headlines — most recently in the Allan Green affair — every TV and radio programme immediately wheels out Ms Nina Lopez-Jones, said to be a "spokeswoman" for the nation's tarts. Her claim rests on the grandiose title of the organisation she represents — the English Collective of Prostitutes.

Perhaps in future broadcasters might think twice before allowing Lopez-Jones to sound off on behalf of "the girls". For, as a "spokesperson" for the "collective" admitted to the *Eye* last week: "This is not a membership organisation." It is, in short, a union with no members.

SHOULD television licence payers' money be used to prosecute libel actions?

No one objects to the Beeb defending itself; but should it really pay up for causes like Esther Rantzen v. *The Sunday People*?

Esther has lost the corporation quite a stack of money over the years as defendant. Now it is paying for her as plaintiff. One for the governors to think about...

EYEBROWS have been raised in the south-west over the ITC's decision to award the independent television franchise to Westcountry TV, a consortium which includes South West Water plc and Harmsworth Press.

SWW is well known to TV viewers in the region as it was responsible for the Camelford acid water incident of 1988. Writs have been issued against the company by solicitors acting for 120 victims, claiming compensation for damage to their health, and SWW has already paid out-of-court damages to 900.

Harmsworth Press, meanwhile, owns Plymouth's *Western Morning News* and many other small local weeklies. One for the Monopolies Commission? Probably not.

A ROW IS about the erupt in the placid world of Radio 3 where the BBC's claim that it is an equal opportunities employer is under attack from those fed up with what they see as *unequal* opportunities in the corridor of culture.

Of six recent arts appointments five have gone to men and a surprising number of male rather than female secretaries are being taken on. This, however, is not the usual chauvinism. The virtual exclusion of women in this case is a result of a crescendo of homosexual patronage that is finally coming to a head.

HACK WATCH No 10: Bryan Appleyard

THE *Sunday Times* has more columns than the Parthenon — and none is bigger or more eye-catching than Bryan Appleyard's, which usually fills most of page two in the News Review.

"Forum by Bryan Appleyard" is its full title, as if the by-line alone might not alert readers to its grand ambitions. Chambers' dictionary defines forum as a place "where public business was transacted and justice was dispensed". The trouble with Appleyard is that the business he transacts has already been concluded by other newspapers (he became aware of such phenomena as Peter Mandelson or green politics years after everyone else), and the judgements he passes down are unfailingly banal.

So why is he given so much space? Simple: Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill believes that he is an intellectual. A couple of years ago Appleyard wrote a book about post-war British culture, *The Pleasures of Peace*. It was trite and superficial, and most reviewers panned it. But Brillo, whose favourite author is Joan Collins, was amazed at Appleyard's apparent erudition. He offered him £80,000 a year to be the *Sunset Times*'s in-house Renaissance Man.

Here is a digest of how Applebrain has earned that salary in the past few months:

12 May: Three months after every other pundit has criticised British Rail for cancelling trains during the winter storms, Appleyard catches up. "The nation of Stephenson and Brunel cannot run a railway that does not grind to a halt at the least powdering of the wrong kind of snow," he jeers.

19 May: Appleyard writes that he has seen the future, and its name is Peter Mandelson. "He is an operator of genius. He plays the press like a musical instrument..."

26 May: After weeks of stories about "devil dogs", Appleyard has his say. "The statesmanlike response to this is genuine concern combined with serious, cool analysis." His own cool analysis concludes that "violent and stupid dogs are often owned by violent and stupid people", and that pit bulls "are bred to be aggressive". Who would have guessed it?

2 June: Appleyard belatedly joins his newspaper's crusade against bank managers — "self-important jobsworths who delight in concealing their own incompetence behind a mass of arbitrary sadism".

16 June: For days the press has been full of articles attacking Nigel "Nige" Kennedy, the violinist. Appleyard once more catches up, denouncing Kennedy's "punk" clothes and "slob-yob" accent.

23 June: Wimbledon fortnight. Appleyard recycles the annual cliché: why can't Britain produce tennis champs? His answer, like everyone else's, is that Britain doesn't have ruthless, high-pressure tennis coaching for teenagers.

7 July: Huge pay-rises for chairmen of privatised industries have been widely criticised all week. Appleyard, novel as ever, criticises them too. "What [they] are indulging in is greed."

21 July: Time to look at another sport. Appleyard reveals that successful professional golfers earn big money, and that many businessmen like to play golf. He notes "the beautiful simplicity of its appeal. What you have to do is put this 1-inch ball into this 4-inch hole 400 yards away using these exotically sculpted sticks." Oh yes.

4 August: The week after Pavarotti's concert in Hyde Park, Appleyard adds his thoughts to the thousands of column inches already devoted to it. Pavarotti, he discloses, "can instantly reduce millions to shivers and tears with two and a half minutes of Nessun Dorma." He concludes that "opera is funny stuff".

11 August: All week, the press has been demanding that Kenneth Baker resign over the escape from Brixton Jail. Appleyard takes an excitingly fresh angle: "Baker should resign".

15 September: Back from holiday to discover a row in the Church of England. His analysis is characteristically daring: "Fissiparous, daft and increasingly ill-defined, the Church of England has been engaged for a decade now in a series of unresolvable internal conflicts about gay marriages, women priests and the nature of its faith."

29 September: Following Nicholas Mosley's resignation as a Booker Prize judge, Appleyard points out that books by Jeffrey Archer or Jilly Cooper do not win the Booker — possibly, he thinks, because they are not very good. Great novels, he says, are expected to have a story, style and ideas. "Only the very best can do all these things, and the very best is very rare."

6 October: Another sporting interlude. Since the newspapers and telly are full of rugby, our idiosyncratic columnist turns his attention to... rugby. He notes that it is a more upmarket game than soccer, and that the crowds are better behaved.

13 October: Appleyard is suddenly struck by the fact that shops like Benetton and the Body Shop want to seem Politically Correct. "Once we were sold things on the assumption that our buying decisions were rational," he comments. "But a few years ago, all that began to change... Now we were told that one product was more 'green' than another." Well spotted!

Perhaps the Appleyard column should have a special logo: Last With The News. We can hardly wait for his piece on this month's Conservative Party conference. On past form, it should appear shortly after Christmas.

MUSIC NEWS

TWO mighty intellects in the classical record business are suffering differing fates.

The first is Simon Foster, the man behind the £8 million haemorrhage suffered by Richard Branson at Virgin Classics. He is seeing his empire turn to ashes as his boss seeks to discover what all this money has actually bought him.

The answer would appear to be not a lot. Sales are dismal and contracts with artists have been cancelled.

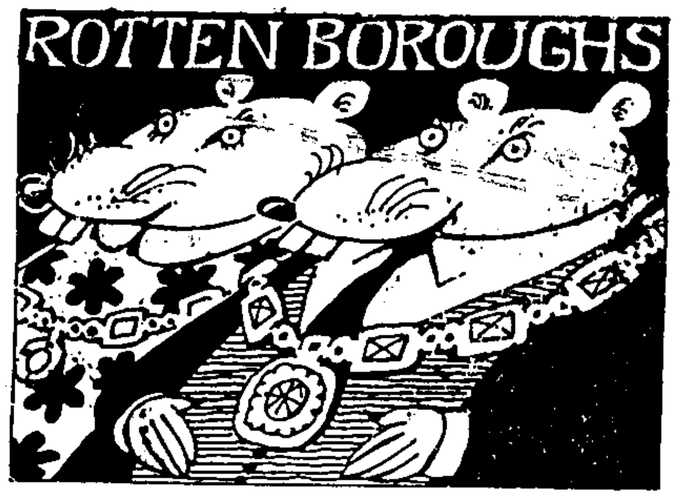
One contract to have been cancelled is that of Andrew Litton, the porcine American stick-wagger who exercises nominal control over the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. He is so unpopular with the players (the BSO's long-serving leader, Brendan O'Brian, even refuses to play for him) that "Tricky Dicky" Hickox has already been lined up as his replacement by the BSO's new manager, Tony Okehampton (recently transferred from the Mersey People's Orchestra, aka the Royal Liverpool Phil).

The second hero is Alan Booth of Collins Classics. Booth, like Foster a producer not a marketing man, has managed to spend even more money than Foster. Informed opinion calculates that £10 million of the Dirty Digger's debt mountain has been poured into Booth's schemes.

He still has job; but will he continue to do so when his new boss, Steve Mason of Pinnacle Distribution, tires of Booth's signing up still more of the leggy, nubile young women who variously claim to play the flute, the bassoon, the violin and the piano etc. and coincidentally look good on record covers. The Collins catalogue looks more like *Spotlight* than that of a serious record company.

It seems Eddie "McBastard" Bell, chief executive of HarperCollins, got shot of Collins Classics to Pinnacle for less than £350,000 rather than keep spending millions honouring the contracts with which Booth had lumbered them. It seems that nobody's told Murdoch yet: that should be fun.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'



BIRMINGHAM

THE infamous St John's children's home welcomed the new children's act with typical style: an allegation of rape by a 14-year-old in its "secure unit" was made the evening before the act took effect.

It was at St John's that a male and female social worker were once found locked together after taking advantage of an unoccupied cell while on duty; and it was also from where one of the city's most dangerous youngsters escaped by hiding in a hostess trolley and letting staff push him out the front door.

The unit houses only four youngsters with a huge ratio of staff to try to ensure nothing untoward happens. Needless to say numbers could not compensate for incompetence and one of the boys, supposedly under 24-hour observation, was left alone with the alleged rape victim.

Police are investigating, as are social services: on past record managers can expect to be exonerated fairly rapidly.

MURKEYSIDE

WHILE some of the city's council services may cost four times more than those provided by other local authorities, Liverpool's lord mayor, Trevor "doggy bag" Smith (see *Eyes passim*), continues to give excellent value for money in the entertainment stakes.

Smith has just lost a court case in which he claimed to be the victim of a politically-motivated "going over". The jury took only 45 minutes to throw out the case against his alleged attacker, leaving Smith looking even sillier than usual.

Most of the recognisable damage to his face occurred when he fell on to the bar of the "Rose & Crown" in Cheapside after an emotionally tiring council meeting. When Inspector Knacker asked him to recall the incident the next day, Smith claimed that a boilermakers' union bully-boy Ian Lowes had issued a *Godfather*-style command to one of his members to "do" Smith.

Everyone on Murkeyside knows that, despite his faults, Lowes fights his own battles. If you upset him, he removes his false teeth and asks you outside. The real clincher, however, was the testimony of the pub's landlady. She stated that Smith had demonstrated a fluent knowledge of Anglo-Saxon when he had complained that she was spending too long on the telephone.

It was only natural, then, to expect calls for Smith's resignation from the unholy alliance of "Militant" and the LibDems, who felt the lord mayor's involvement in drunken brawls was inappropriate for his office — even in a city like Liverpool. They obviously couldn't appreciate a bit of harmless scouse humour, clearly preparation for the panto season.

AS the Welsh Windbag reenacts the Spanish Inquisition on Murkeyside and tries to stop "the 47" from standing in local elections, some of them pop up in the most peculiar places.

John Ord, for example, has just secured a post as adult education manager in Toxteth. Black organisations in the area were quick to pick up that Ord was a member of Degsy's interview panel which gave Sam Bond the job of community relations officer.

When in office, Ord was such a devotee of the Hattonista line that he even tried to sack his own wife for taking part in a strike of NALGO housing benefit officers. He now responds to attempts to sack him by talking of the need "to begin the healing process over the differences of the 1980s".

With a job worth £25,000 a year, Ord's wish to let bygones be bygones is perhaps understandable, but it only dents further the reputation of education chair Gideon Ben-Tovim (*Eye* 776).

The gallant knight must explain to his constituents why initiatives on black education involve creating well-paid jobs for whites. All Ben-Tokenism has done so far is to note that the appointments were made by officers and promise an investigation because of the "concern". Perhaps he ought to look into the cosy relationship between officers and elected councillors while he's about it...

BLAENAU GWENT

COUNCILLORS in Blaenau Gwent, spiritual home of Welsh rugby (R.I.P.) and constituency of one Worzel Gummidge MP, have hit upon an imaginative way to green the valleys.

They are behind a grandiose scheme to spend £70 million on next year's Ebbw Vale Garden Festival, which looks set to become the first horticultural show on earth to boast its own evacuation plan in the event of a toxic waste alert.

This unusual attraction, whose inclusion has strangely been left out of the advance publicity, will become possible if transport company Wistech plc, owners of the old steelworks plot next to the festival site, wins permission to recycle toxic waste while the festivities takes place.

Since the firm's proposed plant (sic) is situated between the festival's planned working farm and kiddies' adventure playground, councillors on the organising committee are planning to seek tenders to supply youngsters with gas masks. They are also wringing their hands at the prospect of fleets of lorries carrying noxious cargoes through the blooming avenues to reach the slag heaps where up to 20,000 gallons of acid and flammable solvents will be stored.

Yet when councillors had the opportunity to buy the site next to the old steelworks (originally an oil-recycling plant) with a compulsory purchase order, they got cold feet muttering about waiting for the property market to boom to save the council money.

Naturally the land soon found a less frugal speculator, Wistech, who, knowing the garden festival was due, assumed correctly that they could continue to use the previous oil-recycling owners' planning permission and applied for a waste re-cycling licence.

Although the council was sensible enough to oppose Wistech's application, Welsh secretary David Hunt is "mindful" to grant it, despite a 12,000-name petition by locals. Now, with only six months to budding time, councillors fear that the sulphates and phosphates could kill off the festival before they even have a chance to attack the local flora and fauna. Having sunk several million pounds into planning the event, the organisers are desperate to cover up any protest in a vain bid to assuage their embarrassment.

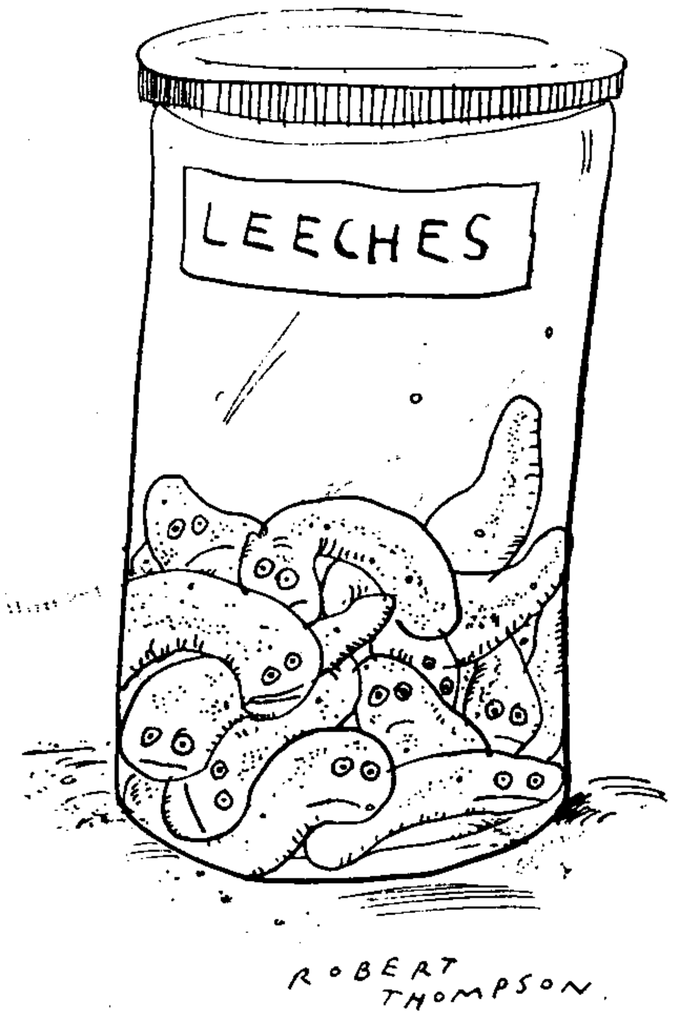
BENT

FRESH scandals are causing more chaos in barmy Bent, still ruled by British politics' oddest coalition — Conservative/Black Power.

Last May two dissaffected Labour councillors Nkechi Amalu-Johnson and Poline Nyaga crossed the floor to give the Tories the slenderest of majorities in return for remunerative committee chairs and support for a bizarre pseudo-African nationalistic dogma.

But the Tories' wildly-ambitious plans to inflict market economies on every service in the borough are threatened by spiralling debts of more than £100 million in unpaid rent, rates and poll tax. Indeed, if the borough's residents don't cough up about £20m by next April, council leaders could personally face surcharge and disqualification under draconian laws introduced by their own party superiors in Downing Street!

So where will Bent's rulers begin their whip round? Probably at the headquarters of the local West Indian Women's Association (WIWA), a local voluntary group, far from popular with Nigerian-born Cllr Amalu-Johnson. WIWA has blatantly made off with tens of thousands of computer equipment bought with a generous inflation-proof council grant awarded back in the good old Labour days of unrestrained hand-outs. The council, with a rare sense of responsibility, recently withdrew WIWA's grant when it refused to cooperate with an inquiry into financial irregularities and why more than a third of the association's £80,000 expenditure last year was met through petty cash.



"Actually I used to work in the hospital, but I found myself getting too attached to the patients"

While scouting the streets of Bent for spare change, councillors should stop off at their nearest housing office where they may find Knacker's finest investigating allegations of a borough-wide "keys for sale" fraud. Allegedly, town hall officers by-passed housing waiting lists and sold vacant council homes to members of the public, and to date seven former housing officers have been arrested.

However, the problem is so endemic that coppers are also investigating allegations that legitimate tenants illicitly sub-let flats or sold rent books to a third party. Town hall officers admit that the corruption is widespread and Bent has itself spent £120,000 it can ill afford bringing in its own investigators to work alongside Knacker.

NORTH TYNESIDE

NOW THAT the devil dogs and juvenile delinquents have gone into winter hibernation, riot-torn North Tyneside, home of the notorious Meadow Well estate, is being torn apart, metaphorically anyway, by town hall developers.

The local urban development corporation, one of a number of pointless quangoid schemes in Geordieland, owns a substantial amount of land next to the ravaged estate, and to the chagrin of the indigenous Tyneside underclass, an up-market housing estate complete with obligatory very useful marina, shopping centre and ski-slope (Newcastle *is* the coldest city in the universe) is being being built there.

According to the 1988 Housing Act, if a private company wants to buy out a council estate the local authority must hold a ballot of tenants with one vote, one household. But official cynicism seems to know no bounds.

Prospective upmarket buyers may well be put off living so close to a rubble-strewn riot-zone; so the Labour-run council has been "unofficially" running the place into oblivion, clearing the estates with an unofficial policy of not replacing tenants who move out, as well as closing down "community" centres so the remaining, disgruntled residents have nowhere to meet.

No one suggests that the council realised that a semi-derelict housing estate with fewer facilities than the polar ice-cap would be a prime site for urban guerilla warfare. But now that riots have done their worst, householders are falling over themselves to leave.

Officially, the council maintains that housing officers can't find people who want to move into Meadow Well. However, the Housing Act also states that empty properties automatically count as a "yes" vote in favour of the prospective buyer!

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

"THE community and the commission have never accepted consumption as a basis for establishing quotas for undertakings, favouring for this purpose the objective factor of production," says a Euro commissioner from Portugal.

One of the results of this farcical policy is that the caring European Community now has a sugar surplus of 7,000 million one kilogram bags, which could be stacked around the Equator two and a half times. Shops, however, are penalised if they dare to try to sell sugar at less than EC prices; and so it is we continue to ruin the nations who can grow sugar.

While Mauritius, Fiji, Guyana and other West Indian economies are devastated for having the cheek to grow sugar more cheaply than our own sugar beet lads, the Brazilian ambassador to the community, laughing at our beet mountains, has calculated that we could dispense with petrol and turn to alcohol-based vehicles for the next five years.

THE Consumers in the European Community Group is an amiably toothless league of well-meaning Eurobores who offer a stream of tragi-comic insights into farm commissioner Ray MacSharry's bizarre empire.

Did you know that:

- ***Half the EC milk surplus is converted into skimmed milk powder and fed back to cows to produce more milk for surplus and that half of this surplus is converted into skimmed milk powder for feeding back to cows...***
- ***The EC has recently built a sultana mountain.***
- ***The commission has reclassified goats as sheep.***
- ***Hyacinth bulbs have been classified as vegetables.***
- ***The EC destroys 866 apples, 1,648 lemons, 1,358 oranges and 41 cauliflowers every minute.***
- ***No UK politician of frontbench rank ever criticizes the Common Agricultural Policy with conviction.***

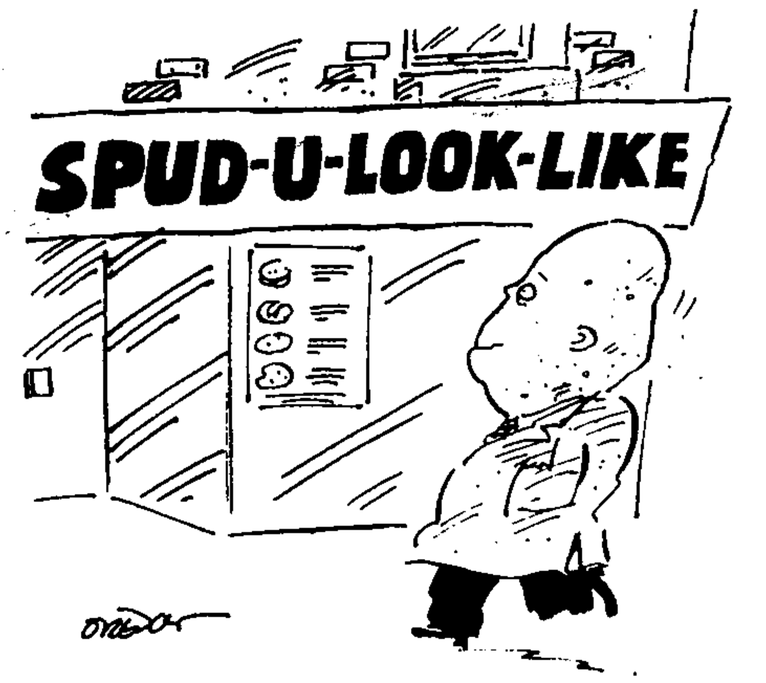
ONE of the most potent — or frustrating — jobs associated with our farming community is up for grabs as the RSPCA looks for a new publicity and marketing guru.

Will it choose someone determined to prevent the pointless brutalisation of animals — or will it simply opt for a huntin' fishin' and shootin' green welly?

Staff at the RSPCA's Horsham headquarters expect a candidate who will not rock the boat: the RSPCA already has an astonishing 25 salaried PR staff who never cause any minister to lose sleep.

But the RSPCA is not of course alone in its anxiety to ingratiate itself with ministers. Sir Basil Feldman, chairman of the executive committee of the National Union of the Tory Party — which is only a few licks short of a peerage — has been thanked for an unusually meaningless farming debate at the Conservatives' festival of complacency in Blackpool.

John Selwyn Glummer, our food and farming supremo, congratulated the national union on placing the debate in the deep obscurity and torpor of the Tuesday morning — before anyone except the NFU and CLA public relations gangs had arrived.



Sporting Life

THE NEXT few weeks will see a resolution of the Jockey Club's submission to the Levy Board requesting a levy payment from the bookmakers in 1992 of £100 million.

All the smart money is betting that the club's proposals have as much chance of succeeding as the executive of Cheltenham racecourse has of persuading Fahd Salman to run Generous in next year's Champion Hurdle.

Back in June, Home Secretary Kenneth Baker rejected even the modest increase in the levy from £37 million to £50 million recommended by the home affairs select committee. Since then Ladbroke's has reported a drop in turnover of 2.8 percent and a 23 percent drop in the half yearly profits of their racing division from £58.6 million to £45 million. As a consequence of the group's overall 17 percent drop in profits, it has just announced a rights issue of £464 million.

Portman Square may be seething that Ladbroke's made even a £45 million profit from betting, but the Jockey Club's indignation alone isn't going to help the Turf gets its hands on any more cash. And the self-basting Baker has apparently given the bookmakers' lobby in Parliament a confidential assurance that he and his colleagues have no intention of rocking the betting duty boat this side of an election.

The Jockey Club still hasn't caught on to the fact that the necessary if very belated attempt to address the endemic problems of British racing has absolutely no chance of winning public and political support so long as the club remains at the helm. Its next big mistake would be assuming that it will do significantly better if Labour forms the next government. The word last week at Westminster from both Labour home affairs committee members Alan Meale and Gerry Bermingham and from shadow health minister and racing enthusiast Robin Cook was that yes, Labour would push for a levy of £50 million with legislation to prevent the bookies passing the cost on to their punters, but they would also want some say on how the money was spent and on who should be spending it.

Specifically Labour wants a major portion of it to go to improve stable lads' pay rather than the level of owners' prize money. It also wants to see the Jockey Club speedily complying with the select committee's other big recommendation and removing itself from all promotional, managerial and financial roles in favour of a professional and democratically constituted British racing authority with true business acumen.

Diary writers have recently expended much ink on the dastardly way the Duke of Roxburgh has been blackballed from Jockey Club membership by a group of neanderthal backwoodsmen. But the real scandal has nothing to do with whether or not Roxburgh is gay or a cad or unclubbable; it lies in the revelation that for all the talk of the new racing "industry", the higher reaches of the Turf are still run as and by a private club. Thus at a crucial moment in the sport's history, a section of the club's inner sanctum led by none other than Sir Piers Bengough seriously believed that the most appropriate new candidate for induction was not a leisure industry high flyer with commercial expertise but a harmless if insipid Scottish duke.

'Major Bonkers'

HEALTH NEWS

DETERMINED managers at Aberdeen's Royal Infirmary continue to bulldoze through their plan to convert the hospital to trust status despite huge opposition from every quarter.

The tiny cabal intent on the move is looking forward to the imminent end of the "consultation period" — although if anyone has been consulted it remains a very well kept secret.

Opposition comes from employees of all grades in Aberdeen's hospitals, the Aberdeen Presbytery, the Trades Council, Aberdeen City Council — *including* its Tory group — and, according to an opinion poll commissioned by Aberdeen District Council, the vast majority of local people: 30,000 signatures have been collected by an anti-trust campaign, while health service and economics experts voice serious disquiet about the proposal.

The council's policy convenor has said: "We find it hard to find anyone in this city who actually supports this proposal."

The plush brochure from the applicants is full of predictable management-speak: "Our application reflects the hopes and aspirations expressed by staff at all levels in all disciplines." The applicants failed to notice that of 100 Grampian doctors at a recent meeting of the British Medical Association, 94 opposed the trust, and on a general ballot of GPs, 86.5 percent opposed it.

The trust applicants and their handful of supporters, including the proposed trust hospital supremo, used-car dealer Bryan Bloomfield, have trampled on every notion of democratic procedure to gain advantage in the face of overwhelming opposition. Using funds that could probably have found some more deserving purpose, they have sent out leaflets pushing their views while remaining remarkably coy about taking on the opposition in a fair fight.

They have refused every invitation to speak at meetings attended by opponents, including in-house hospital gatherings and local political meetings: but they have unhesitatingly used all available hospital magazines and bulletins to push their views.

Their fear of open debate came to a head earlier this month when Grampian television planned a live debate on trust status. Speakers for both sides had been invited, but the programme was scrapped because the trust applicants refused to provide anyone to take part.

It will be interesting to see what effect the row has on the by-election in Kincardine and Deeside, a seat held narrowly for the Tories due to the popularity of the late Alick Buchanan-Smith. The district will be seriously affected by any changes to Aberdeen's hospitals and the Tory candidate — farmer and leading Freemason Marcus Humphrey — when asked about the trust, said: "I don't think it's going to happen." To hedge his bets he also said he couldn't see any reason why it shouldn't go ahead.

A good reason from Mr Humphrey's point of view it should *not* go ahead is that the Tories need desperately to hang on to one of their pathetically few Scottish seats.

HUSBAND

Sally Deedes

TWO LETTERS arrived at a house in Reading last week: one for the present occupier and one for the previous householder. Sent by the Consumer Research Bureau (CRB), both letters were identical.

"I would like to invite you to take part in an important national research project. The Consumer Research Bureau is conducting an extensive survey of consumer options, purchasing habits and future expectations on behalf of a variety of major companies. As you can see from the top of this page the survey has been personally addressed, because you have been selected as a consumer and householder living in a particular geographical area. You are the *only* householder to be asked to complete this is in your immediate vicinity. Er, not quite.

LORD King's promise to slash British Airways seat prices by as much as 50 percent and thus make the bucket shop more or less obsolete has not cut much ice with some travellers.

Two weeks after Lord King's announcement, a Mr Summers from Peterhead in Aberdeenshire rang BA to ask about return tickets to Tel Aviv. The dates he specified were almost fully booked, he was told, and the best economy return ticket BA could offer cost £1,044.

A few telephone calls to local travel agents obtained a ticket for £430 — flying on the same specified dates and with none other than British Airways!

Meanwhile a Mr Clifford has for the last 10 months been commuting between Munich and London every fortnight. Until its demise he had flown Air Europe at an affordable £118; but was then forced to use the BA/Lufthansa duopoly. Only once did he manage to secure its much-vaunted lower fare of £150: generally he was forced to pay £225.

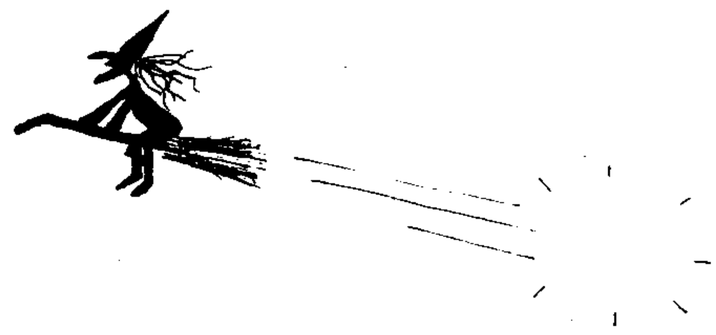
When he asked a stewardess why he could never get the lower fares, he was told those seats go very quickly. How many such seats were there? "I'm not supposed to tell you," was the reply. "But generally only one row, sir" — a staggering six seats!

IN ITS RECENT big advertising campaign British Telecom claimed its prices were coming down "in real terms" and, in particular, that "a three-minute cheap rate local call costs no more than it did in 1981 — just 4.94p inc. VAT."

What BT failed to mention was that the length of its units has been reduced by more than 50 percent, so the awkward truth is that although a three-minute call may cost more or less the same as the price of local call, a very slightly longer call will cost almost double what it did in 1981.

One beady-eyed customer complained about the discrepancy to the Advertising Standards Authority. It concluded that the advertisers had shown that the figures were accurate and stated that a unit had been reduced from nine to four minutes and explained that three-minute calls had been cited since they were the most popular.

The ASA accepted the figures were accurate but considered BT had been over selective in its comparison and asked that cost comparisons be represented fairly in the future.



"I just heard a sonic broom!"

CURSE OF GNOME

ARDEN "Guy" McClelland is the American-born director of Maccorp Holding Ltd which trades under the title of Exact Change.

Last year the *Eye* published an article about Maccorp and McClelland to which the latter took exception and sued. Damages were paid and an apology given.

Could this be the same Arden McClelland who appeared at the Wells Street Magistrates' Court on 17 October charged with assaulting a Chequepoint employee called Bokross outside 37 Great Russell Street? Yes it could.

McClelland was convicted and fined £200 and ordered to pay £500 costs and, to the diminutive Bokross, £250 compensation.

LIBEL NEWS

BACK IN 1987 Malcolm Turnbull, the Australian *Spycatcher* lawyer, appeared on David Frost's TV-am programme and declared that his client, Peter Wright, had still not received the full monies owed to him by Chapman Pincher, the veteran espionage hack, who had sold the secrets of Wright's activities in books and articles.

Within days, Peter Carter-Fuck had issue writs on behalf of Pincher against Turnbull and TV-am. Pincher's statement of claim, settled by barrister Richard Walker, asserted that his reputation had been damaged by the false suggestion that he had been Wright's partner in revealing official secrets and had failed to pay Wright his share of the proceeds.

Eventually, TV-am's solicitors, Simons Muirhead Burton, served their defence, which had been settled by Geoffrey Robertson. This stated that Pincher had, indeed, promised Wright large sums of money in return for betraying the confidence of his MI5 professional code, and that the two men had agreed to split the proceeds fifty-fifty. In support of this pleading, the defendants cited dozens of letters from Pincher to Wright.

TV-am never heard from Carter-Fuck or his mendacious client again, and a couple of months ago the action was struck out for want of prosecution, with Pincher required to pay all TV-am's and Turnbull's costs, not to mention the bill of his solicitor Carter-Fuck.

OUR note in the last *Eye* that solicitor Geoffrey Bindman is campaigning for libel costs to be taxed came as a surprise to some who have been on the receiving end of Bindman's writs.

Taxing, for the benefit of new readers, is the process whereby lawyers can't foist huge costs on to defendants — or indeed plaintiffs — without having them vetted by a special court.

One person who was sued by Bindman two years ago told the lawyer that he was prepared to settle the case and pay the other side's costs, but wanted those costs taxed. The great lawyer refused. "The taxation of costs in the high court is a lengthy and time-consuming business," Bindman wrote to the defendant. "It is unacceptable that further expense and delay should be caused in this way."

Still, there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner that repenteth...

GREAT DICTATORS (No 94)

NOW that the Nobel peace prize committee has alerted the world to the appalling human rights record of General Ne Win and his brutal military regime in Burma, it is worth remembering that Britain holds a special place in Ne Win's heart.

As the *Eye* reported back in May (issue 767), the general visited London in 1987 for medical treatment (a hush-hush trip arranged by Dr Paul Lewis, consultant neuropathologist at the Hammersmith Hospital); but Dr Lewis is not the only one to ingratiate himself with the dictator, whom Aung San Suu Kyi, the peace prize winner, has spent the last three years peacefully opposing.

Bob Taylor, professor of politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies, has an unusually close friendship with the regime, which is better known for its intense dislike of western academics (Suu Kyi happens to be married to one).

Taylor visits Burma regularly and is writing his second book on the country. At times, it is almost as if he has forgotten that the regime killed 3,000 students in cold blood in the 1988 uprising. Describing himself as a "political scientist", in a talk to the Society of Asian Affairs in November 1990, Taylor summarily dismissed the violent events of 1988 as a "stalemate" and went on to complain that "the arguments of the army have been ignored" by the west.

Professor Taylor also happens to be an active member of the South East Asia Trade Advisory Group (Seatag), which is answerable to the Department of Trade and Industry and advises unscrupulous firms wishing to do business with the likes of Ne Win.

Taylor gave SEATAG's annual review paper on Burma and Thailand last December and is personally responsible for assessing Burma's suitability for trade — an alarming prospect, given his positive attitude towards such a vile regime.

Ad nauseam

Sir,

Has anyone noticed the resemblance between the current ad for Woodpecker Cider, which shows a line of cars crushed by a giant hedgehog, and a famous cartoon that appeared in PRIVATE EYE *many years ago (and also ion Patrick Marnham's book* THE PRIVATE EYE STORY*)? Do I get an extra tenner for spotting this?*

Yours faithfully,
J. ATKINSON,

Chorley, Lancs.

Sir,

Have any of your readers noticed the similarity between a current cable TV billboard advert, which reads:

3 simple steps to installing cable TV

1. Plug it in.

2. Er...

3. That's it.

and similar lists which appear in your publication concerning equally inane topics? Are they perchance related?

Yours informingly,
CHRIS KELLY,

Liverpool.

Sir,

There seems to be more than a passing resemblance between the advertisement for lager on the inside back cover of issue 778 and the 'Fold-In' which has been a feature of MAD *magazine for many years. Could the "creative" team who produced this be secret readers of another humorous magazine?*

Yours, on the lookout,
P. ROYAN-POSSE,

London W11.

● ***£10 paid for entries printed***

Letters

Da Doo Ron Ron

Sir,

Cor blimey, guv, what a surprise.

*After all these years I not only get honourable mention in your funny "Connections" piece (*EYE *778), but I make it into "Pseuds Corner" in the same issue.*

Strike a light, what can I say. I don't suppose my small poem about Mikhail Gorbachev's granddaughter earned its "Pseuds" distinction just because I'm a trade unionist from East London.

Nah, that would be snobbery, wouldn't it?

R.M. TODD,

TGWU, London SW1.

Mappa mundani

Sir,

Is the SUNDAY TIMES *"Franchise Weather Map" by any chance related to the Ray Snoddy "Franchise Weather Map" we saw a few days earlier on* THE LATE SHOW*?*

If so — I'd like to enter it for at least three of your regular sections — 1. Ad Nauseam. 2. Lookalike and 3. How They Are Related.

Maybe you could add a further feature... "Total Rip Off"?!

Yours,
KEITH BUTLER,

Winchester, Hants.

All Black notes

Sir,

I was fascinated to see that on the cover of the hit single "World in Union" Charlie Skarbek had been generous enough to acknowledge the contribution of Gustav Holst to the music, albeit on the sixteenth line. The credit reads "All tracks (sic) written (sic) by Holst/Skarbek". This kind of magnanimity throws into relief the unwarranted modesty of composers like Walton and Vaughan Williams who merely claimed to have "arranged" the work of others.

Moreover it is refreshing to know that, like the selectors of the football world cup "theme", Skarbek has not been restrained in his choice by any silly idea about whether Holst's music is appropriate for rugby.

Could I also suggest that the Department of the Environment investigate installing electrodes into the graves of all major composers? After all the turning of Holst and Puccini must be sufficient to provide turbine power for a city the size of Birmingham or Manchester. This source of renewable power should not be overlooked, especially with the Winter Olympics coming up!

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM GIBSON,

Southampton.

Russian salads

Sir,

I address Old Muckspreader's assertion in EYE *775 that "Before the Bolshevik revolution food was not in short supply." What?!*

Yes, Russia exported food, surplus produced by the Great Estates to pay for imports to fuel military and industrial development.

For the peasants, however, there was little surplus and a bad harvest brought widespread starvation. Agricultural tools and techniques "remained extremely primitive, and farm output low." This quote is from that notorious organ of Communist propaganda — THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRIT.

Yours sincerely,
S. THOMPSON,

Darlinghurst, New South Wales.

Ski panting

Sir,

I refer to the caption at the foot of page 27 in EYE *778, in which you falsely accuse me of having been engaged to Helen Walker and to Nicola Jared.*

As any of my students will tell you, it would be astonishing if one person were foolish enough to agree to marry me, let alone two. You seem to be obsessed with the head of economics at Westminster School, which is the post I hold at present. My predecessor, Daniel Jefferies, filled out more column inches of your newspaper than income tax returns.

I assure you that I have not broken off any engagements since I dumped my fiancée in 1985. This was after it transpired that her father owned a cocoa plant from Asia and not, as I had originally supposed, a cocoa plantation. I can only imagine that my parents have arranged a marriage (or two) without bothering to tell me, or that one of my pupils is playing a practical joke (don't suppose you'd care to give me the bastard's name?)

I have discounted the theory that there is another "S. Paraskos". After all, "Paraskos" is hardly "Smith" or "Patel", as I think you'll agree.

Yours,
SKI PARASKOS,

Westminster School, London.

Lookalike

Deggsy

Wally

Sir,

I wonder whether other readers have noticed the resemblance between Mr William Waldegrave, the Secretary of State for Health, and Mr Derek Hatton, the former Deputy Leader of Liverpool City Council. I wonder if they are related and if Mr Waldegrave is attempting to employ the same techniques for the Health Service that Mr Hatton used in Liverpool?

As you may have forgotten what Mr Waldegrave looks like I enclose a photograph that appeared in the DAILY STAR *on 11 October 1991.*

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN WALTERS,

Cardiff.

On your Marks

Sir,

*I sincerely hope that, in her forthcoming dossier on the Earl of Finchley (*EYE *778), Barbara Jones takes cognizance of the following fact: in the Channel 4 programme* AFTER DARK *(late '90), in which the subject under discussion was arms dealing in the Mid-east — and the Gulf in particular — one of the participants, Joey Martyn-Martin, an ex-arms dealer of some repute, expressed immoderate surprise that Mark Thatcher "was not here with us tonight"... embarrassed silence, knowing smirks... and the chairman, in an equally immoderate manner, immediately steered the discussion on to a different track.*

Please, Barbara, satisfy our curiosity!

Yours faithfully,
ALFRED MENDES,

Huttoft, Lincs.

LUVVIES

[Robert] Lindsay is conscious that the critics will either love it or hate it. He insists that it is the right interpretation, that *Becket* is a satire and full of irony (when I suggest that he plays for laughs he bristles and says the laughs are in the play), then admits that the "pyrotechnics" of his performance have rattled Jacobi: "I like being funny because humour brings out some darker sides. I know it frightens Derek because he's not used to it; he's really alarmed by my attitude sometimes. He feels we might be going too far. Well *I* think sometimes that I'm going too far, but it's like a dangerous game. And the play is about games, about manipulation, and I think if you can really play with an audience and just turn them then that's the beauty of the theatre."

ROBERT LINDSAY
(profiled by Allison Pearson)
Independent on Sunday

Submitted by Jeremy Cole.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 for contributions.

Fact totem

Sir,

Did experienced journalist Eve Pollard really write (Letters, EYE *777) "As usual, your facts were wrong"?*

Facts, surely, are facts. You can't have wrong ones. Even the most junior hack knows that.

Yours faithfully,
PETE HEWITT,

London N20.

Some Ms Sheik?

Sir,

Fond as I am of "Heir of Sorrows", I have to let you into a little secret — I'm Muslim and I go out on my own, don't keep quiet and certainly do not look like a Dalek. However, you're right about one thing — we in the West do have a lot to learn from Islam, and I'm glad to see that your rag doesn't confuse corrupt oil sheikhs with the real thing!

Yours faithfully,
A. SMITH (Miss),

London NW1.

I-SPY *St Lucia, Natal, S. Africa*

Submitted by Matthew Chinn. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

A short list

Sir,

Guess the Booker short-list anagrams:
Low-merit rival
Ink bore
Thin minor story
Mm! Tit! Yoho!
Art in miasm
Do dry yodel

Yours,
PAUL TROOP,

Kirriemuir.

Goodbye

Sir,

Have you noticed the similarity of styles between the daily witterings of the Pratt-Dumpster column and the articles in that other paper of record, HELLO!*? Are they perchance related? Do we really need to be told?*

Yours faithfully,
JAMES SHUTTLEWORTH,

Hathersage, Derbyshire.

Hands up

Sir,

Listening to the wireless I am struck by the uncanny similarity between the laughter of Mr Austin Mitchell, the MP for Great Grimsby, and that of the mysteriously disappeared entertainer and glove puppet, Basil Brush. Can they by any chance be related? I note that rumours of Basil's return have only found their way into the press since Mr Mitchell was told, by his leader, to go forth and multiply. I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID DUCKELS,

Driffield, East Yorks.

That's it...

Sir,

Your 30th anniversary edition retailed at 80p. Your first edition retailed at 6d. This reveals an annual price increase of about 12 per cent against average inflation over the period of less than 8 per cent.

Yet again we see a blatant attempt by the capitalist tory media led by yourselves to blatantly and fragrantly strip naked the innocent and hardworking merchant banking community who... er...

Yours,
PAUL HOLDEN,

London SW11.

Passer buy

Sir,

About thirty years ago I attended a CTN Trade Fair in Manchester. One of the stands was occupied by an enormous pile of unsold EYES *and a young chap who told me his name was Rushton.*

He gave me a copy which I perused and was able to inform him that I would never be interested in such a lewd and libellous publication, and I doubted if anyone else would.

Yours faithfully,
M.H.F. CHAYTOR,

Coal Ashton, Sheffield.

PS: Make sure you send my subscription renewal form as usual next month.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Britain's first ever women's medal in the World Rowing Championships — yes, it's been a long time out in the desert for our women rowers."

CHRIS BAILLIEU, BBC1
(B.W. Pegg)

"I won't say it's easier, but it's easier."

RAY ILLINGWORTH, BBC2
(Christopher Newstead)

"You can be famous or infamous. I think we're a bit of both."

MATT GOSS (BROS), Radio 1
(Robert Ramsay)

Les Dennis: *And you're a music teacher, aren't you, Paul?*
Contestant: *Yes, that's right, from Derbyshire.*
Les Dennis: *And what do you teach?*
Contestant: *Er... music.*

Central ITV
(Jan Chilton)

"We are in lap 19 of lap 19."

MURRAY WALKER, BBC
(Paul T. Langan)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

Letter from **India**

from Our Own Correspondent

NARASHIMA Rao, our prime minister, has much in common with Nancy Reagan. Not the clothes or hair do; more the inability to get up in the morning without cosmic help.

When Rao fights his by-election next month he will be guided by astrology, numerology and, more worryingly, the "supernatural psychic energy" of Chandra Swami, the notorious fakir (sic) who is perhaps our most influential power broker.

Despite this Rao is sure of victory in the Nandiyal constituency (he has to become an MP within six months of his June appointment as PM by Congress I) and to continue in the job. For Chandra Swami, godman, faith healer, confidential adviser, international influence peddler, alleged blackmailer and agile negotiator, it will mean continuing immunity from arrest in three federal cases of alleged cheating, forgery and foreign exchange laundering.

Rao, embarrassed by his closeness to the Swami, claimed recently he was neither close nor distant: their association "has been as it has been", he said enigmatically. The Swami, who has free access to Rao and his senior cabinet colleagues, was an "acquaintance who comes and occasionally meets me".

Swami is a close associate of arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi and the Sultan of Brunei, whose wife the Swami is said to have cured of a chronic illness and whom he introduced to the Fayed brothers, leading to their purchase of Harrod's. The portly godman, weighed down with heavy jewellery, receives visitors sitting on a tiger skin and has spent long spells on Nabila, Khashoggi's $50 million yacht, and at his New York flat. He was once friendly with Lonrho boss Tiny Rowland, owner of the *Observer*, but fell foul of him when Rowland realised the Swami has helped the Fayeds win Harrod's.

Rowland responded with front page stories accusing the Swami of deceit and provided material to Indian reporters to denigrate him. (Rowland was also alleged to have paid Swami around £5 million for tape recordings made at a flat in London which proved the sultan's involvement in the Harrod's deal.) Swami is also said to have been "close" to Margaret Thatcher and son Mark, and allegedly pushed Mark's Brunei connection.

His association with Rao dates to the 50s when Nend Chand Jain — later Chandra Swami — was at Hyderabad University and Rao was the local Congress I boss, already into the cosmic sciences. This guru-disciple relationship matured and with Rao's climb up the greasy poll so did Swami's influence. When he went "international" in the mid-80s, Rao, then foreign minister, reportedly wrote to Indian embassies telling them of his imminent arrival. Around then Swami played a pivotal role in trying to topple Rajiv Gandhi. According to insiders, Rao was Swami's preferred replacement. When fraud and currency laundering accusations were made, Swami, through connections, once again left the country.

The Rao-Swami link was further cemented when both were named in a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) report on the St Kitts forgery case in which Gandhi's government tried, via Swami, to falsely implicate Adeya Singh, V.P. Singh's son, in a $21 million scam and thus discredit Singh senior and prevent him succeeding as PM.

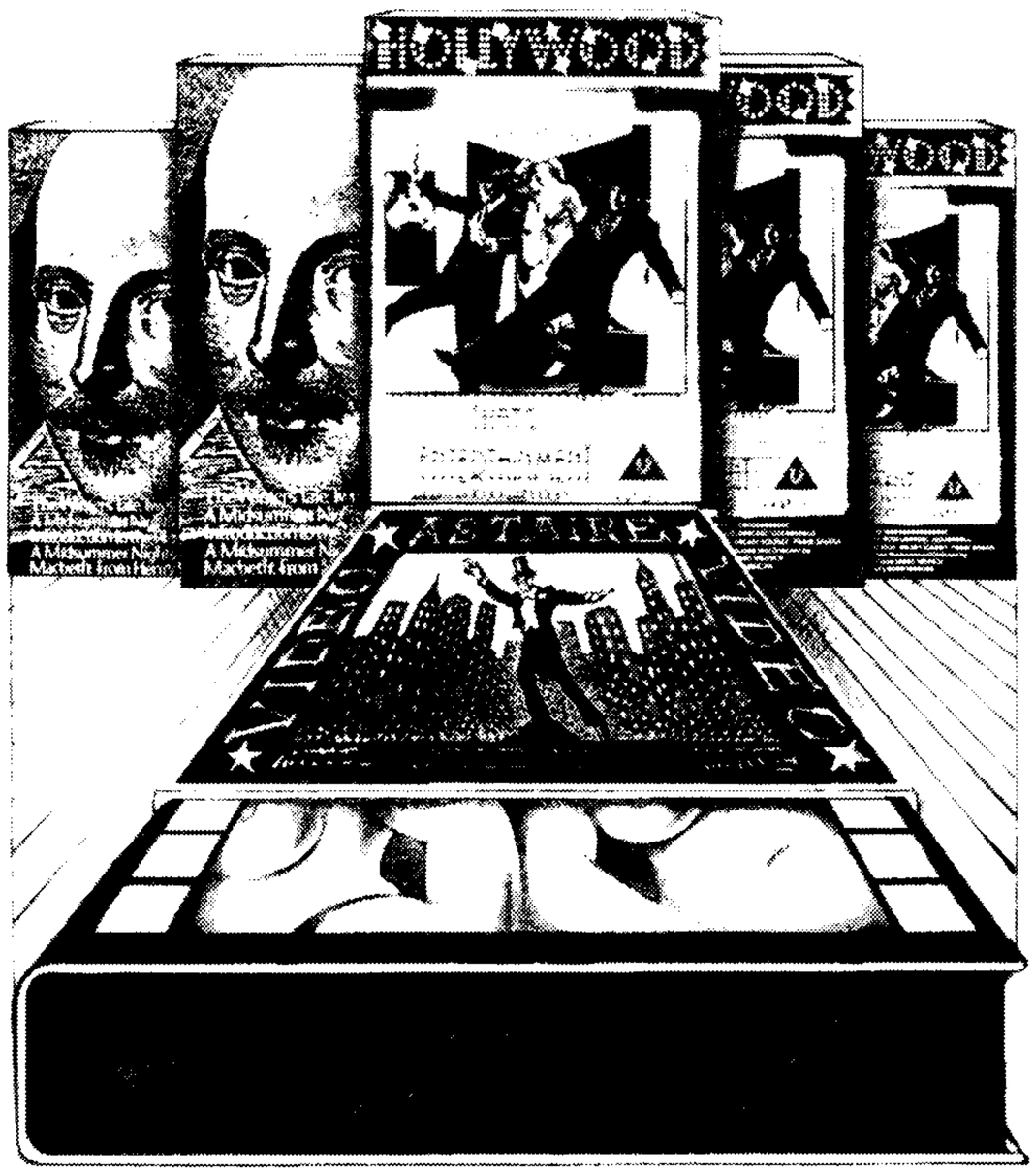
While Rao was *not* accused in the report, he was persuaded by Swami to "coerce" an Indian consulate official in New York to authenticate a forged document meant to confirm Ajeya Singh's illegally amassed fortune in St Kitts. The CBI has documented several meetings between Rao, Swami and Agarwal in New York.

Swami re-hitched his wagon to Rao's when it became clear Rao was on the way up. He lobbied hard among his vast circle of chums to prevent Sharad Pawar from becoming PM, knowing Rao's succession would keep the CBI from his door.

Rao, meanwhile, depends increasingly on astrology and numerology. He was sworn into office in June at a moment carefully calculated after studying the stars, and he moved into his official residence on Race Course Road after similar considerations, rejecting two other homes as inauspicious.

TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE



ILLUMINATED BY BERT KITCHEN

MR CHARLES Bamikole of Brockwell Park, and pastor of the Devout Brethren (Dulwich), was run over and killed outside the church in which the congregation was praying for his safe arrival.

SUDAN's Minister of Information and Culture, Mr Abdalla Mohamed Ahmed, has issued a statement saying: "My Ministry is being reorganized to enable it to perform with a more revolutionary air. It will be divided into four organs: 1) The Minister; 2) The Minister's office; 3) The Minister's Information office; 4) The Minister's Cultural office, plus a general (Ministerial) secretariat to coordinate these organs.

"However, the Information office and the National Corporation of Information and Population Information have been reincorporated as one corporation, the National Corporation of Information and Technical Production. This will be administered through the Ministerial (Cultural) secretariat."

ASKED why he has been touring the country giving illustrated talks on 18th century funeral dirges and mourning chants, Mr Victor Gammon of Ringmer said:

"I was working on a thesis when I came across the dirges. I had never come into contact with such music. Now I tour the country singing about death in the 18th century and my wife, Sheila, accompanies me on the windbox.

"I admit the audiences are small, but that is their problem. In the 18th century there were corpses all over the place. Nowadays people cannot cope with death."

Mrs Judith Edye of the East Grinstead Music Group said: "We asked Mr Gammon for 45 minutes, but we got an hour and a half."

ARRESTED for selling pornographic videos from his stall in Lower Marsh, Mr Kenneth Brighten said: "I am a registered blind person. My suppliers told me I was selling classics like Shakespeare and Fred Astaire." Fined £120.

MR Mark Ramani, an air traffic investigator working for Securoair International, said:

"As the Casa 200-212 took off from Bellavista Strip, 360 miles north-east of Lima, it was fired on by local police who were drunk. When the pilot returned to Bellavista for an emergency landing, they fired again, killing him and the co-pilot. As a result the plane crashed, killing the 15 passengers. The local population tried to lynch the police, but they fled into the jungle, firing as they went."

CHARGED with "passing wind for over 10 minutes" while attending mass in the church of Our Blessed Saviour, Georgetown, Guyana, Mr Ray Charles, an electrician, was asked to choose between a fine or, "because of his name", singing a hymn to the court.

"He took the latter," said Mrs Jany Emmett, a court usher, "and sang all nine verses of IN THE NAME OF JESUS SET ME FREE. *But it was absolutely terrible. So he was fined twelve shillings."*

SPEAKING in her own defence, Mrs Lorenza Pelavo (62) said: "When my husband Dino went missing, my daughter and I searched the San Paulo area for four days and finally found his body in the main morgue.

"But when we got home he was watching the television. At first we thought he was a ghost. But then he said we must have picked the wrong body, because he had got drunk at a party in Rio and had stayed there until he felt better.

"So we beat him black and blue."

INFORMATION: South London Press 9.8.91; Suna Daily Bulletin 19.5.91; Evening Argus 9.8.91; Waterloo Times, summer 1991; Air International, August 1991; New York Herald Tribune 3.7.91; The Gleaner 11.9.91.

MONITORS: Richard J. Green, John Northridge, Jeff Goddard, Paul Dalley, Mr R.A. Bull, Andy Howard, David Hyatt.

TOP TEN BORES

This Week		Last Week	Weeks on List
1	Germaine Greer	2	25
2	Bruce Gyngell	–	–
3	Sir James Goldsmith	8	395
4	Maureen Lipman	–	–
5	Paul Jackson	–	–
6	Sir Bernard Ingham	7	1,037
7	Greg Dyke	–	–
8	Michael Green	–	–
9	Rabbi Julia Neuberger	3	98
10	Richard Branson	–	–

The Bores this week were compiled with the help of the CRE.

"Anotner bloody converted rugby fan"

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Monday

I am beginning to think that all the papers are very considerably biased against the Conservative Party. This morning Mr O'Donnell came to our by no means unluxurious suite at the Imperial Hotel to show us both (me and my friend Jeffrey Archer) the headlines. They all said MAGGIE'S TRIUMPH HIGHLIGHT OF CONFERENCE. What rubbish! When she got the 25-minute standing ovation, who do they think was on the platform next to her? So by my calculation, at least 12.5

minutes of the ovation were directly attributable to myself. But do they point this out? Oh no. Wait till I make my big speech tomorrow. Then they will see what a highlight really means!

Tuesday

It was a very long night for me. It must have been at least 11.15 before I got to bed, after we had been writing my big speech. Jeffrey has come up with the most brilliant jokes. For instance, he suggests that I should say: "Kinnock, Kinnock, who's there?" And then, when I've paused, I reply: "It'll be me, after the next election!" Another really good one was about the way I sometimes say "Oh yes." Jeffrey suggested that I should refer to my education and say: "Well at least I've got six O-Yes levels." He really is a genius! At last it was ready to for me to read out to my wife Norman, who is my severest critic. She said it was as good as anything I had ever done, which I think is the highest praise she has ever given me.

Tuesday night — very late (10.15)

What a successful day. My speech was acclaimed on all sides as a triumph because it was such a complete contrast to Mrs Thatcher. Whereas she was dominating forceful and in complete command of the conference, I represented a very welcome change. The delegates showed their appreciation of the new style by avoiding the embarrassing and unnecessary scenes of wild applause and enthusiasm that had so marred previous conferences.

Wednesday

Oh dear. It is a bit of a come-down after my "Quiet Conference Triumph" as the *Sunday Telegraph* called it, to have to get back to talking about the Health Service. Today I nailed the Labour lie once and for all, and I expect I will have to go on doing so right up until the election. As I told the Cabinet: "So long as I am prime minister, the Health Service is safe." My friend Chris made one of his funny faces and everyone laughed. I expect they were amused by Mr Waldegrave's new haircut. I told him to get it cut on the advice of Mr Reece. "A man with a woolly hairstyle," said Mr Reece, "looks like a man with woolly ideas." Now Mr Waldegrave is much more convincing.

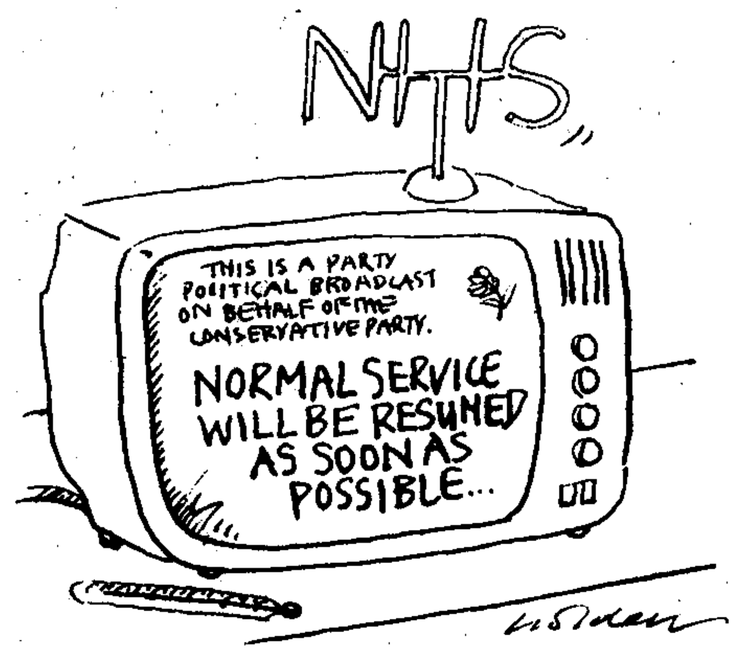
Norma Lamont announced that he was going off to Bangkok for a very important economic summit. "Another chance for you to massage the figures," said Mr Mellor, who is something of a wag. We all laughed again, though I've no idea why.

Thursday

Today I really surprised everyone by showing that my Citizen's Charter is no mere election-winning gimmick, as everyone seems to think. When British Rail announced that they were going to put up all the fares, I said: "Oh no, you're not." They said: "Oh yes, we are," just like they do in the pantomimes at the Huntingdon Hippodrome, with Gareth Hunt from the coffee commercial and Miss Jan Leeming as Dick Whittington. Anyway, after we'd had a bit of an argument, they caved in and offered a compromise. All the fares would go up except the ones in my constituency. This is the kind of thing which would never have happened under Mrs Thatcher, because she went everywhere by car.

Friday

Today I went with Mr Hurd to the beautiful country of Harare for the Commonwealth Conference. This is the one where Mrs Thatcher used to get into such trouble by arguing with everybody about South Africa. But this time it is completely different. We are all agreed that South Africa


NHS
THIS IS A PARTY POLITICAL BROADCAST ON BEHALF OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY.
NORMAL SERVICE WILL BE RESUMED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE...

should be allowed to play test match cricket as soon as possible. Mr Hurd said: "They may not have as many blacks in their team as we do, but at least they might have one or two more South Africans." My first important meeting was with the South African leader Mr Mandela, with whom I had breakfast. We found we had a lot in common, especially on the subject of Mrs Thatcher, whom neither of us considered a particularly impressive world leader. We agreed to have lunch sometime, which we did a few hours later. Over lunch we found that we shared a mutual disregard for Mrs Thatcher, and we agreed to continue our conversation over dinner. That evening I was delighted to see my new friend Mr Mandela sitting next to me once again. We agreed that one thing had united the Commonwealth — the demise of Mrs Thatcher. "At least that's one dictator gone," I said, by way of a joke, "now for the rest." Mr Hurd kicked me very hard under the table, and whispered that I should keep to the subject of cricket on which I was a not inconsiderable authority.

Saturday

The sun is shining and it is a glorious day. I never thought I would live to see Mrs Thatcher admit she has made a mistake. But now it has happened over the Television Franchises. We were all watching in the hotel TV lounge and it was the first item on *Hello Harare*, their popular six o'clock news programme. The newsreader announced that Mrs Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, had acknowledged that she had made a terrible error of judgement. They all looked at me and one of them said: "It's a bit late to do anything about it now."

Sunday

I am becoming increasingly sick of the BBC, which continues to suggest that, like Mrs Thatcher, I want to privatise the NHS. I am entirely unlike Mrs Thatcher in this regard, which is why I have decided to send off a strongly worded letter of complaint to the BBC. "That's what Mrs Thatcher used to do," said Norman, to my even more considerable annoyance.

99% FIND SUNDAY TIMES 'A PEST'

by Our Home Affairs Staff **Boy George Harassment Ford**

NINETY-NINE per cent of people in Britain find the *Sunday Times* "actively offensive both at home and in the workplace", a Gnomeplan poll revealed today.

Questioned in the wake of the Judge Thomas controversy, 99 per cent of all those asked personal questions by *Sunday Times* researchers accosting them in the street replied that they found the behaviour of the newspaper "tantamount to harassment".

Further questions revealed that 78 per cent of readers found the size of the newspaper "excessive and intrusive" with a further 89 per cent objecting to it being pushed through their letter box early on Sunday morning when they were trying to sleep.

When does 'fooling around' become harassment?

A clearcut case

A Gibraltar housewife, Mrs Carmen Proetta, was one woman definitely harassed by the *Sunday Times*. They pestered her as if she were little better than a prostitute and constantly made obscene suggestions about her in their pages.

"They made my life hell," she said. "In the end I was forced to take them to court to stop them harassing me."

A borderline case

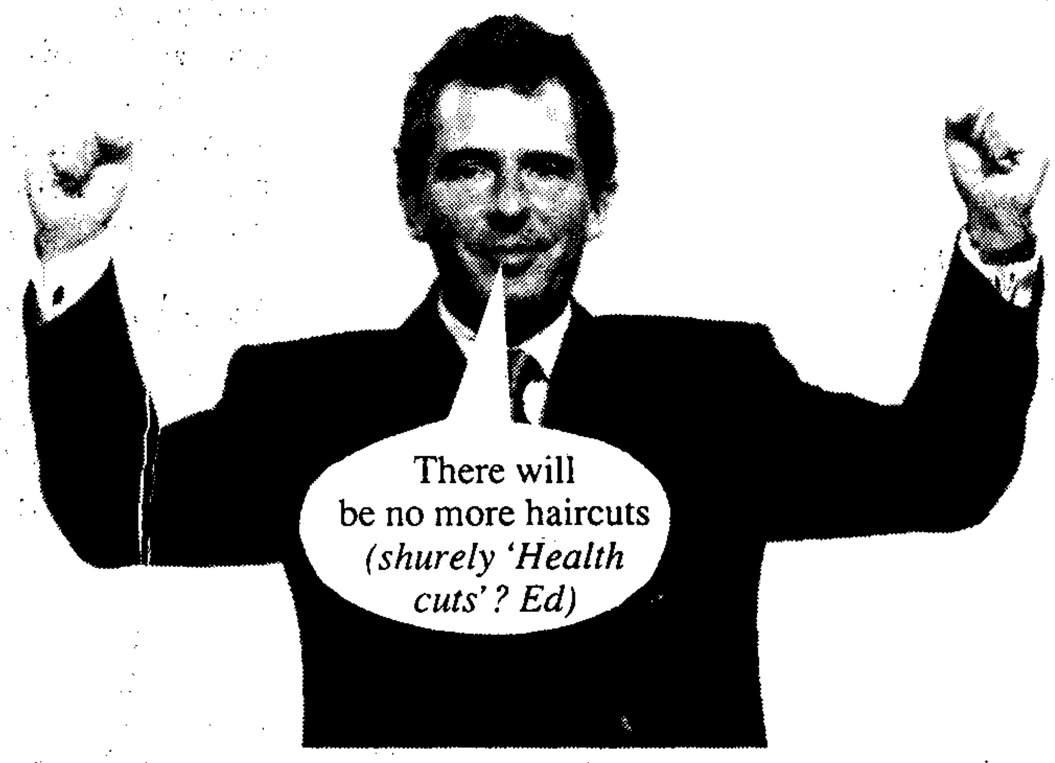
An Indian-born research assistant, Miss Pamella Borderline, received the attention of *Sunday Times* man Andrew Brillopad, 46. Did she welcome his advances, including the gift of a Kenwood Mixer? Or was he guilty of pestering Miss Bordermen with his attention? Perhaps we will never know.

Yes! It's Booker Prize Rhyming Slang!

Booker Prize	**Compromise**
Fudge	**Judge**
Eminent panel	**Usual flannel**
Short List	**Must have been pissed**
Martin Amis	**Far too famous**
Rohinton Mistry	**All ask "Who he?"**
Same as ever	**William Trevor**
Timothy Mo	**Thank you, no**
Bit shoddy	**Doyle, Roddy**
Ben Okri	**Whole thing's a mockery**

(That's enough Booker Prize. Ed.)

NHS LATEST



THAT US SENATE SEX HEARING IN FULL

Day 94

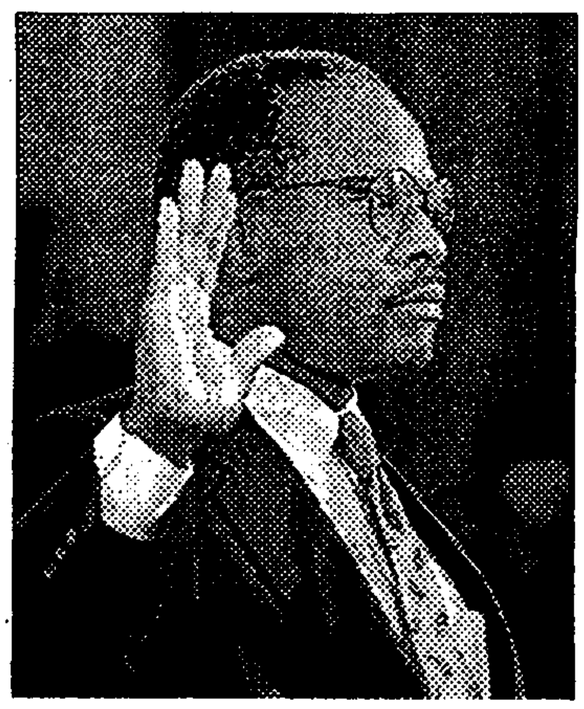
SENATOR HIRAM J. COCKLEBURGER *(presiding):* We must now continue with the hearing of testimony as to why Judge John Thomas should or should not be admitted as a judge of the Very Supreme Court of these United States of the USA.

OTHER SENATORS: Get on with it, let's get to where they talk dirty.

SENATOR EDWARD KOPECHNE *(shurely 'Chappaquiddick? Ed):* Ah can put mah hand on mah heart, mah fellow Americans, and say that nevah in all mah life have I been so shocked as by the truly vicious and shocking rumours that I have been spreading around in recent weeks about the way this man has behaved towards a poor defenceless woman, suffering harassment in her place of work. The place for that kind of thing in a modern society is in a beach bungalow in the Kennedy compound at Palm Beach.

SENATOR JOSEPH KINNOCK: Never once since the dawn of time has such a totally, utterly and totally utterly immoral act been perpetrated, committed and totally perpetrated by a man on a woman.

SENATOR COCKLEBURGER: May I remind this Committee that we have not yet heard any evidence upon which to base a judgement on this matter. Call Professor Fanny Hill, the Professor of Feminist Legal Studies



at the University of New Dworkin.

PROFESSOR HILL *(pointing at black man in suit):* That's the one, it was him who done it.

COCKLEBURGER: Professor, could I prevail upon you to describe in your own explicit words and in some graphic detail, bearing in mind that this hearing is now on prime time television and being conveyed by satellite to the whole of mankind, just what he did, when and how?

PROFESSOR HILL: Indeedy-doody, sir, so I will. It is my duty, under God, so to do. Are you all listening carefully?

(Heavy breathing from Senator Kennedy)

HILL: On one occasion, Judge John Thomas approached my work station one morning and made a number of explicit personal remarks, including the words "Good morning, Fanny", "Have a nice day" and "My penis is twelve yards long".

(Gasps of shock and pleasure from ageing senators)

FLOOR MANAGER: Can you say that again, sweetheart? More emphasis on the word "penis", and then we'll go into the big sequence on the porno videos, OK? You're doing great. Relax, have fun, let's go.

PROF HILL: I would also like to recall the occasion when I was sitting there in my own body space when the accused invaded my contact zone by offering me a cup of coffee with the words: "Is this hot enough for you?" There was no mistaking the intimidatory verbal rape that was perpetrated in this statement.

SENATOR KOPECHNE: And when this outrage had been perpetrated, what was your reaction? Did you feel violated, disgusted, dirty? Did you feel as if you were drowning in an automobile that had driven off a bridge? *(Shurely 'sea of filth'? Ed.)*

HILL: My immediate reaction was to forget all about it for ten years until I heard on TV that Judge Thomas was the conservative nominee for the Supreme Court.

SENATOR LEGOVER: Back in the great state of South Semolina, where ah come from, folks are mighty worried about this very grave and important issue of sexual harassmentation in the workplace and in the place of work. We believe firmly in the essential dignity of women of every creed and gender, which is why, as a Senator of the United States, I believe it is my firm and resolute duty to suck up *(shurely 'stand up'? Ed)* to this very important lobby.

COCKLEBURGER: Bring on the little black fellow with the glasses.

TREVOR MACDONALD *(for it is he):* Bong! The Senate confirms Judge in Harassment Case. Dong! It's a close thing, but Bush gets his man in. Bonk! And those Samoans beat Wales by 133 to nil.

COCKLEBURGER: Could we now have the newly confirmed appointee?

JUDGE THOMAS *(for it is he at last):* Ah just want to say that never before in the history of human conflict has any man suffered, as I have, such mendacity, ignominy, traducity, smearment, falsification, slanderation and endragment through the mire of malicious innuendizement. Ah can truly say that I would rather be lynched on a tree by the Ku Klux Klan than to endure the ordeal of such traducement, smearity, mendation, fellatio...

COCKLEBURGER: Thank you, judge, we all enjoyed that very much. But we're just coming up to a commercial break, so there's just time for a quick prayer from our well-loved Senate Chaplain, the Rev J.C. Flannelbacker.

FLANNELBACKER: Praise the Lord. Let he who is without sin cast the first vote against our brother. For verily, I say to you, America may never be the same again should this stain be allowed to remain upon our flag. *(Sings)* "Oh say, can't you see, By the dawn's early light..."

(Weeping senators all join in. Screen fills with commercial for Old Uncle Sam's All-American Apple Pie)

VOICE OVER: Pure, wholesome, clean and lifegiving. That's what the American Way is all about.

DIRECTOR: OK, cut studio. That was great, everyone.

(Hearing room empties as senators adjourn for urgent appointments with call-girls, coke dealers, Mafia hitmen etc)

VAST ICEBERG THREAT TO SHIPPING

by Our Woman
in the South Atlantic
Antarctica Riceberg

A HUGE mass of frozen newspapers over 100 miles wide and 1,000 miles long could well pose a major danger to the world's shipping, it was revealed last night.

The giant berg is now headed for South America and shows no signs of breaking up. Scientists believe that the massive coagulation of impacted newsprint was formed very recently when millions of unsold copies of the *European* were dumped in Antarctica near the South Pole.

Since then, thanks to global warming, the frozen land mass itself has broken up, unleashing the vast Europeanberg into the warmer seas of the South Atlantic.

Scientists promise eventually the whole thing will sink without trace. "We do not know exactly when," said one, "but it can only be a matter of weeks."

Robert Maxwell is 108 stone.

mere Port, Cheshire. After eating some of the cake Mrs Jellicoe had "nightmares" including that she was being chased by rottweilers and that she was starring on Esther Rantzen's *That's Life* television show.

The Independent

Great Bores Of Today.

"...typical of the French isn't it? they've never understood fair play Saturday was a bloody disgrace they couldn't wait to get stuck in forget the game he should have been sent off and attacking the ref really takes the biscuit and again they had to wait to get into the tunnel and do it in the dark typical I think they should ban them you just can't trust them they're cowards and cheats whereas the Western Samoans they're real gentlemen and they're going to be a real force in world rugby OK they went home empty-handed but they made a lot of friends that's what rugby's all about 'course the Welsh are washed up when you think that ten years ago they were the best in the world J.P.R. Williams and you know all of them but now it's pathetic my money's on the Kiwis though I'd love England to win and we could still do it probably the best pack we've ever had I'm not sure about changing the Number Eight though..."

YOU WERE COMPLETELY OUT OF YOUR BRAIN AT THAT CLUB LAST NIGHT, GARY. I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU IN SUCH A STATE.
I SHOULD KNOW BETTER I SUPPOSE BUT I TOOK SOME ACID FOR OLD TIMES SAKE.
I THOUGHT YOU HAD.
IF I REMEMBER RIGHTLY I CAUGHT YOU ATTEMPTING TO LACE MY DRINK.
SORRY ABOUT THAT, MATE.
THEN YOU TRIED TO DRINK YOUR TRAINERS... I'VE NEVER BEEN SO EMBARRASSED IN MY LIFE.

The winners and the losers in the great franchise shake-up that will transform ITV into exactly what it was before (only slightly worse)

by our Media Staff
Jane Thynne-Stuff
and Raymond Snodoff

OUT GO

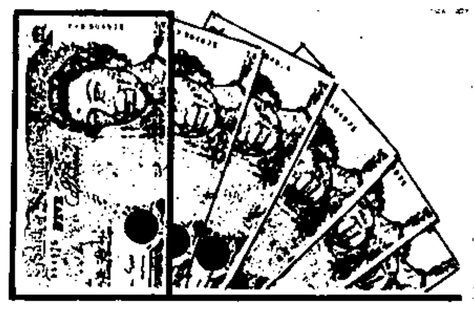
Thamesdown TV, best-known for *Mind Yer Back, Wot's Up Guv* and the quiz show *Name That Fruit*. However in recent years there has been criticism of Thamesdown's programmes, such as the documentary *Why Thatcher Murdered The IRA Men*, which was accused of telling the truth.

Eggcup TV, which blazed the cornflake trail and introduced the brilliant TV concept of having two people sitting on a sofa talking to Jane Seymour. It also created such now famous personalities as weather-girl Tracey Cardigan, astrologer Mike Moustache and chat-show host Verucca Chunder.

Tintagel TV, the regional company which was best-known for never having any programmes networked in its 11-year history, despite launching such quality shows as *Who's In Tintagel Tonight, Inspector Penhaligon Investigates* and the documentary series *The History of the Cornish Pasty*.

IN COME

Cash TV, headed by ace accountant Gilbert Goldcard, 40. From his start in top accountants Callard and Bowser, Goldcard has held a number of key television posts, including Chief Accountant to the now-defunct Humberside TV, where he pioneered a revolutionary new filing system which won the Prix d'Argent at the 1982 Television Accountants' Festival in Trelford New Town. Goldcard has lined up a consortium including a galaxy of show biz legends, such as Jim Groper, host of Avon TV's popular technology show *Jim'll Fax It*, comedian Benny Lenny and actress Gemma Emma, who played Lady Wibble in Cumbria TV's *The Wibbles of Wibble Street*.



Moneyvision, the brainchild of Aussie whizzkid Bruce Visa, 45, who was previously finance director of Australia's popular Outback TV, where he pioneered such shows as *Auf Wiedersehen Abo, The Dancing Vet* and the international cartoon classic *Deputy Dingo*. The Moneyvision prospectus includes exciting plans for a new weekly current affairs programme called *The Current Affairs Programme*. Plans also include a classic detective serial set in the West Country, *Inspector Penhaligon Investigates* (bought in from Tintagel TV), and a new-style arts-and-media magazine, provisionally entitled *What's Happening Next*.

Frosties TV, which takes over from Eggcup TV as the early-morning goldmine. The ITC were clearly impressed by merchant banker Eric Gebler-Smedcroft and his team of fellow-directors, including Kelvin Greed, Samuel Grab and Charity Avarice, formerly producer of UTV's long-running money programme *Money Talks*. Their revolutionary plans for early broadcasting include a daily programme where viewers phone in the news from their newspapers, with wry asides from anchorpersons Su Pollard and Charles Moore plus "aerobic weather forecasts" from new-find Tracy Burchill.

The 10 rules the ITC followed in picking the new franchises

1. The quality of programmes offered in the prospectus will be the deciding factor in all cases unless it isn't.
2. **The highest bidder will automatically be offered the franchise, except in most cases.**
3. **Bidders offering no money and no quality will be unlikely to granted a franchise, except in the case of Central TV.**
4. **In the case of any company offering a ridiculously large sum to the Treasury in the hope of ensuring that they retain their franchise, we will give them a nasty shock. N.B. TVS.**
5. **Any consortium including Mr Melvyn Bragg shall automatically be accepted, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to contemporary culture.**
6. **Any of the many consortia including David Frost shall not be deemed acceptable. This clause is never to be revealed to anybody.**
7. **Granada TV, the flagship of quality commercial television, maker of *Coronation Street*, is to be kept in at the personal request of the Prime Minister, although he could do without *World In Action*.**
8. **Thames TV is to be axed, as a last gesture of respect to the late Supreme Ruler of the Universe, M. Thatch, whose many achievements include dreaming up these ridiculous rules.**
9. **Er...**
10. **That's it.**

Continuing our popular exclusive feature (as seen in all newspapers and magazines)

UP FRONT

⊃ Question Time for Sir Robin? Who's the lady making your Day? Here's the news — she's got expensive taste so make sure you Canna Ford her! Could be quite a knight!

It's a dog's life for some. Michael may be a Winner in the cinema, but Jenny's found a new best friend to come between them. Miss Seagrove must be barking — or maybe the director's pay cheques are smaller than the ones on his shirt! I think she's just taking the Michael.

Kop a load of this! Liverpool's boss Graeme Souness is trying to get to the Heart of the Matter with TV's Joan Bakewell! She'll be giving him the red card and it'll be an early bath for Graeme. Watch out, Joannie!

TV's Kate O'Mara looks happy with new young boyfriend Tony Slattery. Whose Lines Are They Anyway? Kate's, of course, but she won't worry about her age as long as she's getting her Howard's [illegible] get you everywhere!

Who's hat girl? She looks Bordes out of her mind! And to cap it all there's no sign of the new man in her life — "Naughty But Nige" Dempster!

Will Lynsey make the Grade? The tiny pop star can't put anything on Channel Four's Number One! What a DePauling suggestion! Perhaps she's just taking the Michael. *(You've done this joke. Ed.)*

Anytime, anyplace, anywhere. That's Martina! And who's the blonde busting to say "You're 40, Love?" It's Princess Michael. Kent you spot a royal? What a couple of volley birds!

Go Westwood, young woman! That's top designer Vivienne's advice to star model Linda Evangelista! Looks like Vivienne's strapped for ideas this [illegible] lines are on her face. *(You've already done this joke as well. Ed.)*

(That's enough pisspoor captions to dreary PR photos by clapped-out hacks. Ed.)

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: Prince Charles is about to build his idea of a perfect village in the Dorsetshire countryside.

Now read on...

CHARLES sat in the hundred-yard-long vaulted Ronson Hall in Buckingham Palace, waiting for the arrival of a delegation of planning officers from Toytown in Dorset. Over the mantelpiece in front of him was hung a huge oil painting of the Battle of Asil Nadir by Sir Edwin Landesman, the celebrated Victorian academician, and the scene contrasted sadly with the news in his *Daily Telegraph* — that his regiment, the Prince's Own 17th and 38th Buffoons, was to be disbanded.

And there they were in the painting in their days of glory, scything down the hordes of savage Buthelezi warriors under their mad leader King Buka Buka.

How distressing it all was. The way in which some petty bureaucrat could do away with centuries of history with a stroke of his pen. It really was, let's face it, appalling. How had Sir Laurens summarised this kind of break with tradition? It was in the introduction to *Swahili Gardens Open To The Public 1947* — "Fings ain't wot they used to be." How true that was, and how much truer it must have been...

He looked at his watch, an Icke astrological chronometer, a gift from Mrs Betty Shine. Any minute now the good burghers of the District Council would arrive to nod through his plans. Charles stood up and strode confidently towards the balsa wood scale model made by his most-favoured architect, Sir Barry Krier. There it was, all laid out before him in miniature. A Mantuan hill town in a Thomas Hardy setting. It looked even more idyllic as a shaft of autumn light burst through the leaded casement of the mock-Gothic embonpoint designed by the Prince Consort himself following a visit to the cathedral of Wittgenstein in 1847, when he *(Get on with it. Ed.)*

How very appealing it looked. Charles's eye wandered over the cobbled streets, the little church, the agreeable library stocked with books on environmental issues, the organic bakery, the old steam laundry, the bright red Sir Gilbert George phoneboxes operated with pennies... it was a miracle to be sure. He was just picking up a tiny model of a lady on an old-fashioned bicycle which had fallen over outside the homeopathic chemist when Sir Alan Fitztightly entered and coughed discreetly, showing in two bearded figures in jeans and corduroy jackets.

"The two gentlemen from Dorset, Sire. A Mr Gabriel Nellist and Mr Walter Everspart."

Charles turned to welcome his visitors with a gracious smile.

"How very good of you to come all this way for what is, after all, little more than a sort of formality."

The bearded men looked at each other, and Mr Nellist spoke first in his rich Dorset brogue.

"I don't know about that, Sire. There's a lot of straight talkin' to be done. We'll start with the fire regulations. Mr Everspart, if you please..."

The councillor opened his briefcase and produced a sheaf of planning objections.

"Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1962 there must be compulsory access to fire escape routes to and from the highway. Your buildings don't have none."

Mr Nellist then chipped in.

"That's just the start. There are no

one-way systems in the plan as it stands, which contravenes the Crime Prevention Act, Amended 1983, which stipulates the provision of cul-de-sac situations at every sixth T-junction to facilitate suspect apprehension in a crime scenario."

Charles was almost speechless.

"Crime? What do you mean? Not in my village. And fire escapes would be an absolute eyesore..."

Mr Nellist was indifferent to his royal patron's protestations.

"Be that as it may, Sire. I'd like to come to the church now, which is in defiance of every regulation known to man. Most notably, the spire is a snow-risk and contravenes the Blizzard Safety Act of 1988. Snow would accumulate on the spire with the danger of possible collapse and subsequent death of passing pedestrians. Moreover, there is insufficient ambulance access between the church and the osteopathic clinic in what you have designated Betjeman Square. And, to cap it all, there are no traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, hazard signs, road markings or cones in the Vicarage Lane."

"Or anywhere else, I have to add," added Mr Everspart unnecessarily.

Charles was white with fury.

"Don't you see that the whole idea of Toytown is to go back to the old ways, to escape from your nondescript multi-storey carbuncles and your... er...er..."

Undaunted, the two bearded functionaries deposited their bulky file on top of the model, thereby crushing the Hugh Casson Royal Watercolour Gallery, the Cello Workshop, and Old Mother Waldegrave's Home-Made T-Shop.

Charles lost his temper completely.

"Vandals! Visigoths! Er... Thingies!"

As the two men left discreetly, Charles felt overcome by weariness and depression and slumped into the comfortable Mountbatten high-backed armchair. He stared at his dream village...

NOW HE was walking through the agreeable streets of his beloved Toytown, and wasn't that a band he could hear playing in Milligan Square? Yes, it was the Regimental Band of the Buffoons playing *March of the Corgis*. His step quickened in time to the music as he turned the corner to find the whole regiment in full dress uniform waiting to be inspected outside the tavern.

So they had been preserved after all! He had won!

"Present arms!" cried the moustachioed Sergeant-Major. A hundred rifles snapped in unison. It was only then that Charles noticed two bearded figures blindfolded and tied to the coaching posts in the middle of the square. Surely that was Nellist and the other johnny?

"Permission to shoot them for treason, Sire?" a fresh-faced subaltern eagerly demanded. "The firing squad awaits your orders."

Charles saluted.

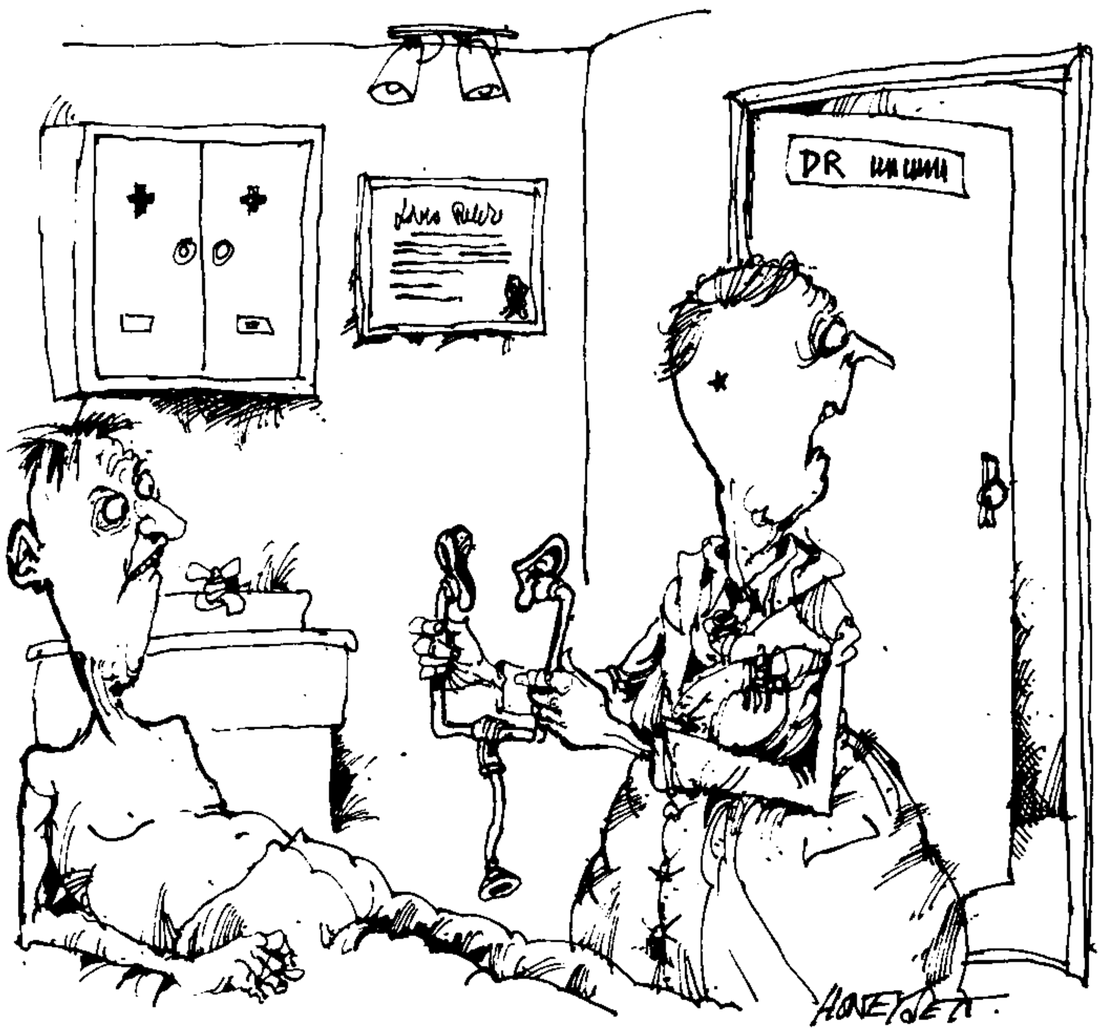
"Yes. Yes. Carry on, Number One. Carry on."

As one man, the kilted soldiers raised their weapons, took aim, and fired. Bang!

BANG! Charles woke with a start. "What? Number One? What...?" As his eyes focused, he spied the source of the crash that had broken his sleep.

It was the model collapsing under the weight of the councillor's file. And now it lay in pieces at his feet. The end of a dream...

(To be continued)



"Nurse, fetch the glue again, please"

An end to squatters — new Bill passed

by Our Home Affairs Staff
Polly Toynbore

THE GOVERNMENT is to bring an end to the misery caused to home owners every year by illegal occupation, or squatting.

The Home Secretary, Mr Kenneth Baker, yesterday announced tough new measures to bring an end to what he termed "the menace of uninvited incumbents".

He cited one particularly distressing case of a capacious Whitehall house, the rightful property of an elderly lady and her businessman husband, who, after taking a short break in France, returned to London to find that someone else had moved in and that they had no redress under the law as it then stood.

But now, he said, it would be possible for this lady, a Mrs T., to evict the squatters and to regain her rightful occupancy at once.

John Major is 47¾.

NEW SERVICE FOR EYE READERS

Your Sumo questions answered

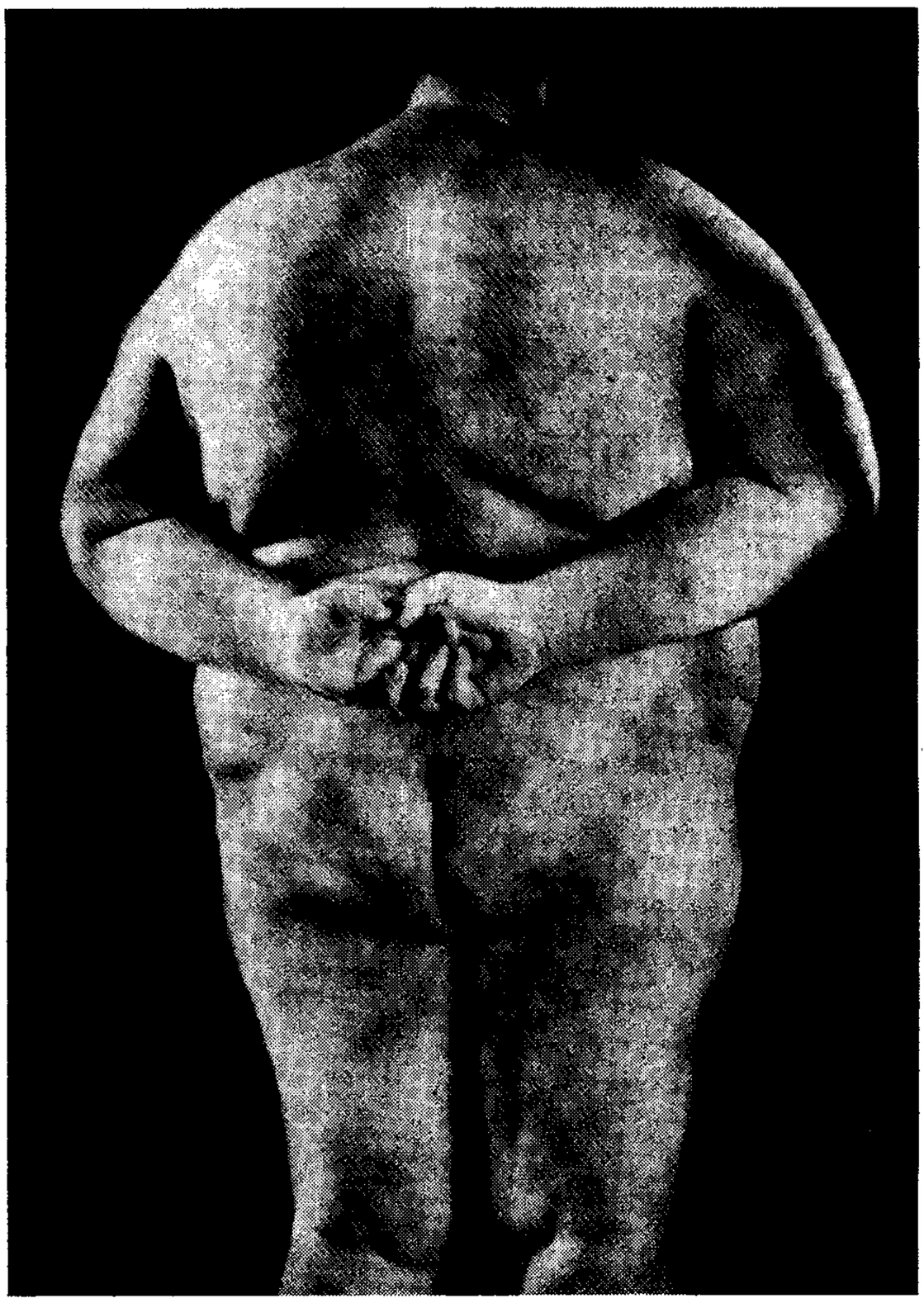
by Old Maxwell

Q: Dear Old Maxwell,
Can you settle a longstanding dispute between myself and my sumo-mad best friend Wayne? Last week we were watching the live TV Basho on Channel 4 and in the fifth Tojo for the first Gõh, Japan's 18th-ranking Hokikoki ("The Lard Tub") narrowly defeated the much higher ranking No. 16 Karaoke ("The Gut Bucket"). Wayne says there is a compulsory penalty Tippex for a foot straying outside the white Tommikupa ring, and therefore Hokikoki should have forfeited seven Jiffs. I on the other hand go along with commentators Barry Garry and Gary Barry, who supported the referee. The slow-motion video does not help us. Who is right?
Dwayne Cone
328 Billericay Road
Essex

A: Sumo is not a competitive sport. It is a religious ritual that takes place in the mind. You are on the wrong path, Grasshopper. *(Shurely 'Wayne'? Ed.)*

Q: Dear Old Maxwell,
Can you settle a longstanding dispute between myself and my sumo-mad best friend, Dwayne? Last week we were watching the live TV Basho on Channel 4 and before the first Typhoo there was a long bit of preparation involving the two main wrestlers, Kerripaka ("The Flab Mountain") and Hulahoopi ("The Fat Git") which commentators Garry Barry and Barry Garry explained was the Mojo or purification of the Yoyo. Hulahoopi stamped his foot on the outer hu seven times. and Kerripaka immediately replied with a huge shout. I believe he said "Ishiguru Kawasaki Yamamoto". Dwayne however claims that he said "Nice to see you. To see you nice." We have watched the slow-motion video but it does not help. Can you enlighten us on this important aspect of the sumo ceremony?
Dwayne Pylon
327 Billericay Road
Essex

A: Sumo is not a ritual. It is a competitive physical combat sport. You are not paying attention. Wake up, Grasshopper. *(Surely 'Dwayne'? Ed.)*



Q: Dear Old Maxwell,
Why does anyone in their right mind watch sumo? Surely it is the dullest thing on television?
Miss Tracella Crisps
326 Billericay Road
Essex

A: The Japanese Garden is a triumph of art over nature. It is a controlled environment for meditation. Areas of raked stones replace the more traditional flowerbed, a boulder or rock becomes a focal point, and such greenery as exists is kept to a minimum. Such gardens are ideal for the typical Channel 4 viewer. Jeremy, you've built a Japanese Garden in your car. How did you go about it? *(That's enough Japanese rubbish. Ed.)*

SPRING BOOKS

Aren't Menopause Awful? by Dr Auberon Greer

(Snipcock and Tweed, £29.99)

MANY men at the age of 50 go through a change of life. They experience hot flushes as a result of drinking too much claret at lunch, they become moody, irritable and bonkers, and in very severe cases they write their memoirs and appear on TV dressed in a kaftan, balancing glasses of Californian wine on their heads.

Dr Greer writes movingly of one particular case, his own.

Will This Do? by Dr Germaine Waugh

(Tweed and Snipcock, £31.99)

MANY woman at the age of 50 go through a change of life. Having spent an entire lifetime lecturing people and being outrageously rude to everyone, they suddenly find that they are growing old. They immediately start lecturing people and being outrageously rude to them. Dr Waugh writes movingly on one particular case, her own.

Isn't Sir James Wonderful? by Ivan Enormous-Advance

(Goldsmith Books, £0.25)

TOP financial journalist Enormous-Advance charts the rise and rise of the most remarkable international tycoon since Robert Maxwell. He tells the moving story of how Sir James won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in singlehandedly preserving Britain's libel lawyers from extinction. "Brilliant," *Sunday Times*. "Magnifique," *L'Expresse*. "Piss poor" Everyone else.

The Dr. Jonathan Miller Pop-Up Book of Madness

(BBC Books, £47.99).

MANY men of 50 pop up on television talking about madness. Dr Miller writes movingly about one such case. *(That's enough mad books by 50 year-olds. Ed.)*

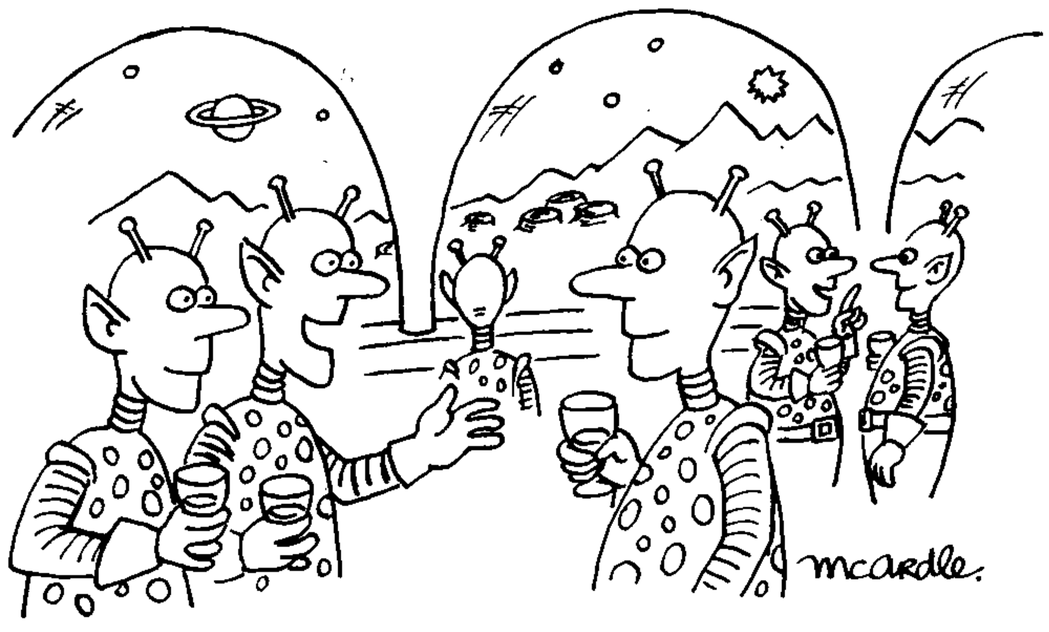
Book war hots up

by Our Man In Charing Cross **Matt Dillons**

THE stability of the book world is under attack again as publishers threaten to produce a number of readable books in defiance of the NBG Agreement.

Until now under the terms of the agreement all books published had to be NBG (No Bloody Good) but now it is possible, though unlikely, that publishers will renege on the deal and try to bring out "something half-way decent".

Mr Terry Pentos is 25%.



"This is Ploot, he's well known in corn circles"

Deirdre Spart's 10 tell-tale ways to prove that you're being sexually harassed (and should take your case to the European Court of Human Rights)

1. Your boss is a man.

2. He looks at you in a funny way, especially when you come in late.

3. He goes out of his way to say "Good morning" when you enter the office.

4. He comments on your dress in a suggestive way, e.g. "Can you please hang up your coat, I keep on tripping over it."

5. He tries to engage you in improper conversation, e.g. "Did you see *Inspector Morse* on TV last night?"

6. He makes overt gestures in your presence, such as scratching parts of his body, e.g. his head.

7. Er...

8, 9, 10. That's it.

*R*adio 4

NICK CLARG: ...and later in the programme we shall be talking to the Croatian deputy foreign minister and Lord Carrington about the hopes for the latest cease-fire proposals in the light of today's renewed fighting around the town of Vszjkovec.

But first, a look closer to home at the question which everyone is asking — as the prospect of an early election fades, and that of a March or even a May election comes nearer to the top of the agenda, is the British electorate going to get bored with the nonstop diet of politics? In a word, is politics boring? Over the next 20 minutes, I shall be talking to some of Britain's top politicians, including Sir David Steel MP, Labour MP Austin Mitchell and Tory MP Julian Critchley. But first I put the question to two of our leading political commentators, Peter Kellner of the *Indy*, and Peter Jenkins, also of the *Indy*.

Peter, can I come to you first?

BOTH: Yes.

CLARG: Ha, ha, ha. Peter Kellner, how do you think we should look at the findings of the latest polls, showing that 88 per cent of the electorate are beginning to find politics boring? Should the politicians be taking account of this? Do you think it will be a significant factor in their calculations in the months before the election finally looms, or fades, as the case may be?

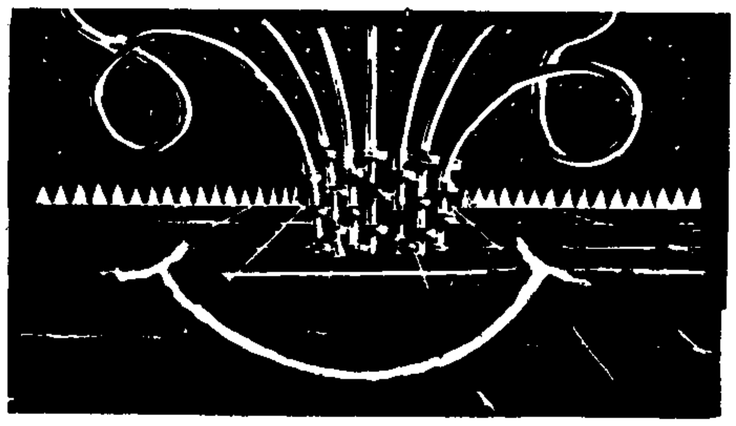
KELLNER: Well, I think we can say that this is only one poll and we would have to see a good many more polls on this subject before we could begin to draw any firm conclusions about whether the boredom factor is in fact a serious factor, or merely a temporary blip.

JENKINS: I go some of the way with you on that, Peter, but I think we also have to take into account that, as the election looms, or fades, politicians' speeches are bound to reflect that situation, whatever it is.

CLARG: Sir David Steel, you've been watching elections for 35 years now. As a veteran observer of these things, would you say that boredom is becoming a more significant factor?

STEEL: I'm very glad you asked me that, because, undoubtedly *(contd. 94 KHzzzzzzzzz)*

DIARY



MARTIN AMIS

The possibility that Iraq will soon have nuclear weapons could have chilling consequences for the world. It is up to writers who have the power to articulate the unimaginable to stress the urgency of the situation, to pick words of sufficient terror to show that nuclear weapons are the exploding turds of our age, that a nuke-turd is like a liquified-biro in the top pocket of a beige suit, probably three-piece, that the aftermath of nuclear collar-hoist will be more serious than anything we have so far encountered, like a gob of snot-phlegm — phlot? snegm? — on a shiny kitchen surface, or an ear-glob in a plate of vichyssoise, which is chilling; chilling at the moment in fact: I'm having it for lunch with croutons after tennis with Barnesy.

Tennis with Barnesy is, as you know, a regular fixture of my afternoons. Here's a rundown of my morning:

8.00: Have breakfast with my kids. Worry about them being nuked before lunch. At least they weren't in the Holocaust. Or were they? Play with the concept. Walk them to school for a photographer from *Time Out*. Taxi back.

8.45: Arrive at my work sock. "Sock" has become famous as one of the brilliant new words I have invented. It means "flat", but I don't say "flat", I say "sock". I like to think of myself as primarily a comical writer, you see. Arrive at my work "sock" (!) and write three sentences. Ring my agent to tell her that I have written three sentences, immediately. Quickly stick up the dartboard and push the pinball machine centre-stage in preparation.

9.00: Journalist arrives to cross-question me about the three sentences. As he walks in, he notices the pinball-machine and the dartboard, thank god. I say the three sentences have gone pretty well. He wonders if he can ask me what they're about. I say writing three sentences is a bit like dropping a nuke, you never know whether you've hit the target or not, so I'd rather not say.

11.45: Still talking about the three sentences, and about death, which I don't call death in the middle sentence, I call eadth. This is because it's the duty of every novelist living now, in the first half of the 20th century, to reinvent the language. By writing "eadth", I am forcing the reader to confront what it really means.

Suddenly realise that I haven't shown the journalist my snooker cue. Say: "Sorry, lad, time's up, I've got to play a game of snooker with an ordinary person." Journalist obviously impressed, never heard of a writer playing snooker with an ordinary person before. I demonstrate my ear for language "Ordinary persons say 'innit' and 'as such' all the time," I tell him. "Very acute," he says, and I give him time to write it all down with his pus-pen in a scum-pad before showing him the front-hole of the — (!) — sock.

Death is the snare in God's drum-set, the pot-noodle in the scabby puddle, the dandruff in the bouffant, the zit in the plug-hole, the mouldy slice of pig in the two-door saloon fridge.

To lunch at the Caprice nosebag with my mates McEwan and Raine. McEwan is writing a new novel about a man who has sado-masochistic sexual intercourse with a koala and ends it all by biting its head off and hiding it under his hat but he is found out when he goes to somewhere unnamed but which seems very like Buckingham Palace and he is asked to remove all headgear before greeting the Head of State. It's about the psycho/political male/female relationship, and it's very 20th century.

Raine is working on a new poem in which he voices his fears about death today. In one of the most haunting images in 20th Century Literature, he compares death to a "can of Australian peaches in heavy syrup". Over lunch, we discuss this haunting image. "I remember when I saw the corpse of my great-granny," says Raine, tear-pustules bursting through his head-sockets. "I had two vivid impressions. First, that she looked like an Australian canned peach in heavy syrup. Second, that there was snot still in her nose, *even though she was dead.*"

"Says one helluva lot about the 20th Century," says McEwan, dabbing his eyes.

"Utterly memorable," I choke.

"Who's for the Creme Caramel?" says the waiter.

Silently, with no conferring, each of us jots down "Creme Caramel" as a suitable shattering image, probably of AIDS.

Choosing names for characters is a complex job for any novelist living in the here and now, the vying demands of swirling realities encroaching on a detumescent actuality to be crystallised in specific codas and propagated in words at once formal and meaningless. For example, probably my most closely realised character was Kevin Gobfart.

Let me, the author-figure, explain. I had spent weeks trying to create a combination of names that would echo the character's almost apocalyptic obsession with cultural detritus. I had first head the name "Kevin" about three years ago while watching football on television at the Pinters' in Campden Hill Square, and I had been storing it up for possible use in the future. Then, beating around for a surname, I combined "gob" with "fart" to form "Gobfart", so that the subliminal message of some form of bodily excess might find its way into the intelligent reader's consciousness without detracting from the moment-to-moment realism of the novel.

In my new novel, I have an entirely different main character — more sophisticated, more essentially *humane*, some would argue — and so I have had to think of an entirely different name for him. After hard thought and creative interplay, the name I have come up with it: Trev Belchwilly.

Raine has already faxed to say he considers it my most ingenious yet, well up to Nabokov at his best.

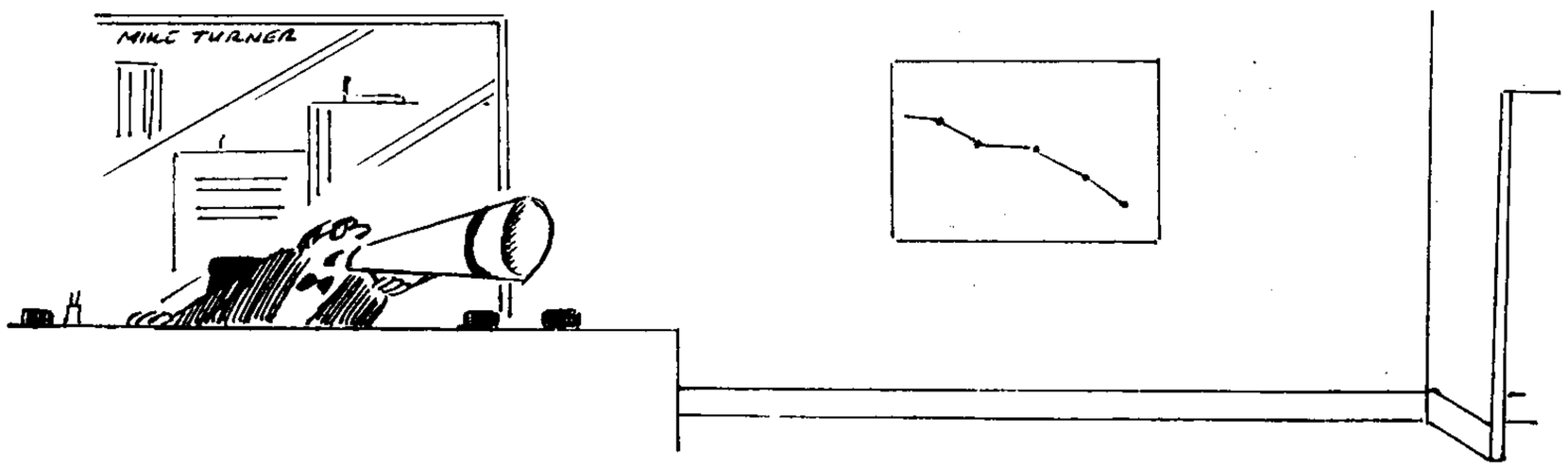
I have been called the poet of the nuclear underclass. Though my own background was "privileged", I have tramped the low-life of Notting Hill and South Kensington in my "foot-socks" (shoes!) for minutes on end, even dropping into pubs and coffee-bars and "rug-rethink-parlours" (that's barbers to you!!!) with a mission to capture the authentic jungle-language of urban decay. So when the gourmandising Jeff T. Fatface eats a Farty-Wankburger in the Shag'n'Piss Diner in the third chapter of my last novel but one, *A Concerned Warning to the Planet* (1983), then burps and says: "Crikey, mate, jolly tasty, 'ave one on me, me old hearty, innit as such, gor bless yer guv", you can be sure that this is the dialogue of today, visionary, disturbing, and chillingly true.

A Manor house with 5 recs, 10 beds, 4 baths, 5 acres, lake, stables, dovecote, dead gardener, 80 mins Waterloo, £600pw.

The Times

Most attract det Cottage style hse. Only 100 yds Farting Downs. Gas c/h. Hall, cloak, 2 rec kit/breakfast, study, 5 beds, bath. Garage. Pleasant gdns.

Croydon Guardian



"Memo to all staff, Miss Brewer — cut down the phone calls"

Literary Review

Phew, what a stinker

Among the Thugs
Bill Buford
(Secker, £14.99)

BILL BUFORD, a portly American braggart, is the editor of *Granta*, the literary lad's rag. It's been a position of some influence. Over the last 10 years Buford has steadily promoted a particular style, essentially a bastardized form of travel-writing — "pre-eminently, a narrative told in the first person, authenticated by lived experience", as he once ploddingly defined it.

Such writing suits editors better than readers, because, unlike true imaginative writing, it can be commissioned. You pack somebody off to a spicy location and whether or not anything much happens to him, you get your piece at the end. If stuck for copy, the writer can gamesomely describe his toils while "looking for" his story.

So off the boys go: to Peru, Afghanistan, the Phillipines, the Amazon, Borneo, Bradford, all dependably getting "In Trouble Again", as one dreadful issue of *Granta* called it, and then coming home to write it up, modestly pretending they hadn't been that brave *really*.

The only difficulty with this wonderful scheme is that literature can never be "authenticated by lived experience". It is well-written or not. If it's not, the fact that the writer was actually there makes no difference whatsoever. And, pleasantly enough, Buford has fallen into just this trap. Appropriately, his own murderously boring book represents the last gasp of the *Granta* house-style.

It was meant to be one of the first breaths. But *Among the Thugs*, a study of football hooligans, has been prodigiously delayed. One measure of Buford's salesmanship has been the number of times it was confidently announced in Secker's catalogues throughout the eighties. Year in, year out the poor saps were saying they expected the manuscript to arrive any day now. Buford's last great deadline was the world cup. The book was *definitely*, for sure, cross my heart and hope to die, going to be ready for that. Wasn't it?

This autumn's Secker catalogue was one of the few of the last five year in which the book did not feature. The trick worked. Here finally we have it. And immediately it's obvious that Buford had a pretty good reason for his procrastination: his problem was not just idleness, but ineptitude.

The book is embarrassingly lame. The idea must have looked such a winner too. Being American, Buford could write a travel book about the British! Britain may be relatively troublefree, but we have got football hooligans. All Buford had to do was get among them.

But that's all he has done. This book is a dim record of Buford's attendance at a number of football matches. Sometimes he went to the pub too. At other times he just watched on television, listened on the radio, [illegible] press clippings sent by an agency.

First he sees a football "special" go by a station in Wales. Then, in 1984, he goes on a package to Turin with uncouth Manchester United supporters. Then he attends a National Front night in a pub in Bury St Edmunds. Then he watches an uneventful Cambridge United match and a rowdier one in Fulham. He goes to the 1988 European Championships in Dusseldorf — "The city looked like Beirut," he says pathetically — and listens to the Hillsborough disaster on the radio. Finally he makes it to Cagliari for the world cup first round (where the journalists outnumbered the supporters), and gets beaten up by the Italian police, but he fails to make it to Turin for the finals.

His conclusions? Thugs are thuggish. No, really, they are; they're nasty. This smashing things and beating people up — it's bad news. Something gets into people in a crowd. You'd always assumed football hooligans were rather sweet and thoughtful? Well, you couldn't have been more wrong.

Buford ends up simply calling these hooligans "stupid" and "little shits" over and over again. Even he realizes that this does not make great reading. He watches a yob lobbing bottles. "I was left with nothing more than the act of observing this little shit. Why was he of interest? What was there to say but: I have now watched a little shit?" Precisely. But

no doubt he'd already spent the advance.

Buford tries to dramatise this dross by pretending, in best New Journalism style, that he himself becomes caught up in the thuggery. Sure, he doesn't become a hooligan; but after a match he does swear at an elderly couple obstructing him on the Underground. And when the fans vandalise Dawes Road in Fulham he has an orgasm, I think. "There is glass breaking: it is a window. I hear it, but I don't see it, but the effect is sensational — literally sensational: it fills the senses, reverberates inside me, as though a blast of voltage has passed through my limbs. Something has burst, erupted." Dearie me.

But the excitement doesn't last. The low point of Buford's attempt to make himself interesting is Hillsborough. "Hillsborough: the most famous stadium in the world. What happened there confirmed something in me." By which he means, hearing it on the radio makes him feel he has, for good and all, seen enough of football hooligans. His book, a different sort of disaster, has a similar effect on its readers.

Books & Bookmen

☐ THE apotheosis of Eddie Arturo McBastard Bell is almost complete as the Iron Lady has, after almost a year of fumbled lobbying, got herself the publisher she deserves: Big Eddie hiself.

As the HarperCollins chief executive points out, there was no auction. Mrs Thatcher picked Harper Collins, or HarperCollins — desperate to return to the front line of celebrity publishing — picked Mrs T. There was no auction because no one came to the party except Cap'n Bob, and he didn't offer enough loot.

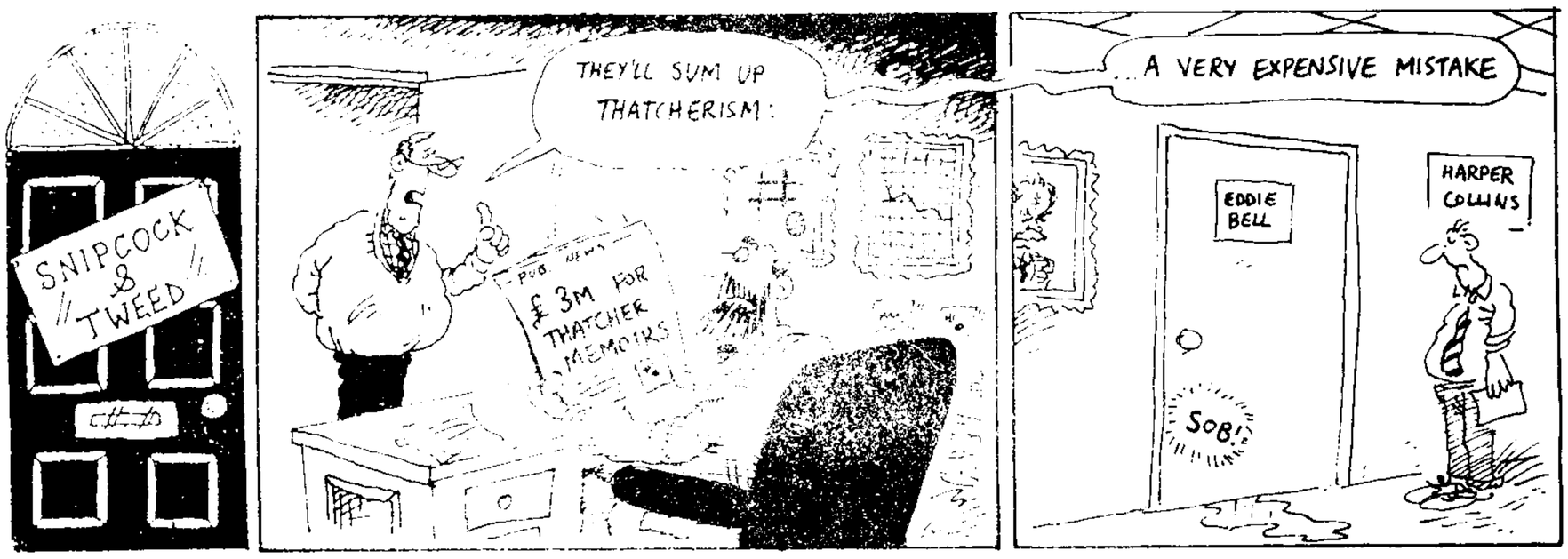
The one-time Lederene is thought to have been paid as little as £1.5m for two unwritten books. Had she talked turkey within a month of leaving office and had son Mark, posing as a literary agent, not dropped so many passes, she could have been assured of at least £10m.

Literary agents are now crawling out of the woodwork claiming to have had cosy fireside chats with Mrs Thatcher "personally", she asking them if they were "one of us". Others tell of being invited to a large house in the country where, en masse, they were harangued by Mark for not promising to secure bigger bucks for mother. "We were tongue-lashed by Mark," says the agent from Curtis Brown who was present.

"Mrs Thatcher will write the book herself," reports Eddie, which perhaps is unusual with HarperCollins authors, bearing in mind the recent Alastair McLean verdict which went against the firm. But if Mrs Thatcher proves to have the patience to write her own account of her time in office without a little help from her friends, including fellow HarperCollins memoirist Sir Bernard Ingham, it will come as a relief to those she might otherwise have beckoned towards.

Volume one is scheduled for the autumn of 1993 when it will be serialised endlessly in the *Sunset Times*. The real proprietor of the memoirs is of course not McBastard but the Dirty Digger, Eddie's ultimate paymaster. Volume two, discussing her life before Downing Street, is unlikely to be completed.

Most HarperCollins authors, like most authors anywhere, lean leftwards rather than rightwards and thus there is much hilarity as McBastard has sent all HarperCollins's star authors copies of his press release expressing his pleasure and pride in having signed up Mrs T.



■ SOMEONE who will not, presumably, be writing to Nadine Gordimer to congratulate her on being awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature is Alex Finer of *Esquire* who, when recently offered three new short stories by the great writer, opined that they would be of no interest to his readership as they were merely of "parochial South African interest".

'Bookworm'

Ordnance

Arms and the Mirror Man

LAST WEEKEND thousands of copies of a new book — *The Samson Option: Israel, America and the Bomb* — were secretly delivered to bookshops across Britain. The reason for the secrecy was simple: UK publishers Faber & Faber did not want details of its sensational allegations to leak out before the book was in the shops.

The allegations, made in chapter 22 by Ari Ben-Menashe, the former Israeli intelligence agent, are indeed sensational. For Ben-Menashe claims, among other things, that he ran the foreign editor of the *Daily Mirror*, Nicholas Davies, as a Mossad "intelligence asset" and that Davies was even dealing in arms from his desk at the newspaper's office in Holborn Circus.

This week Ben-Menashe is giving evidence before a House and Senate committee in Washington about the October Surprise affair (the allegations that Ronald Reagan and George Bush knew about a secret deal to free the Tehran hostages in 1979). But in Britain all eyes will be on his claims in the *The Samson Option*, written by Pulitzer prizewinning US reporter Seymour Hersh.

Indeed, by Monday morning, hacks from several newspapers were on to the story, in particular from the *Daily Mail*, *Evening Standard* and *Financial Times*. But the *Eye* has had exclusive access to documents obtained by Faber & Faber.

Ben-Menashe has also written a book — his memoirs of working for Mossad — which will shortly be published in Australia and of which Faber & Faber are trying to buy the rights. According to Ben-Menashe, Davies was first lured into Mossad's net back in the 1970s when, as a foreign correspondent travelling around the Persian Gulf, he provided Mossad agents with military sightseeing snaps.

Later, in the early 1980s, Ben-Menashe was introduced to Davies and began to offer him substantial rewards for running a business dealing in arms to Iran on behalf of Israel, which wanted the Iranians to defeat Saddam Hussein's forces in the Iran-Iraq war.

In the manuscript of his memoirs, Ben-Menashe alleges that over several years up until early 1989, Davies allegedly received $1,550,000 from a Mossad slush fund, which was paid into bank accounts in Grand Cayman, Belgium and Luxembourg.

Given that Davies had debts from a failed printing business and needed to pay alimony to his ex-wife, not to mention keep his new wife, a young actress named Janet Fielding, in appropriate style, colleagues at the *Daily Mirror* were never able to understand how he could afford to own polo ponies. Quoted in a footnote in the Hersh book, former *Daily Mirror* editor Mike Molloy says Davies "always was a kind of entrepreneurial character — selling and importing on the side".

Ben-Menashe and Davies set up a London office for a company called Ora Limited or Ora Group, supposedly named after a girl in Ben-Menashe's office who later became his wife. However, this company was never registered in the UK. Ora used headed notepaper with Davies's home address in Streatham, south London, and later with a new home address in the Elephant and Castle district. During the working day, Davies's direct line at the *Daily Mirror* was used to receive calls from Iranians discussing arms deals. As Ben-Menashe puts it in the manuscript of his memoirs: "The Foreign Desk never had a truer definition."

A letter to Nicholas Davis [*sic*] of Ora Ltd from Frank Cutts of Burkin Tradelinks Ltd, dated 14 January 1985, requests "1,000 new M2HB Machine Guns with M3 mount accessories, tools and cleaning equipment" (each machine gun plus accessories to cost $7,500). Another letter from Nicolas Davis [*sic*] of Ora Ltd to an Israeli lawyer, Ran Yegnes, in Tel Aviv, requests a quotation for "new original Soviet made red bakalite AK-47 (Klashnikov) magazines".

There are also telexes from 1987 in which Ben-Menashe introduced Davies as a representative of Ora Ltd with the authority to sign contracts. The telexes were addressed to Mr K. Fakhrieh, who was at the time secretary of the Iranian Supreme Defence Council, and Ayatollah Rafsanjani, and the deal under discussion was for the sale of 4,000 TOW missiles to Iran for $13,800 each.

The general nature of Ben-Menashe's allegations that Davies was operating as an arms dealer have been corroborated by Janet Fielding, Davies's actress wife from 1982 to 1985, who has told Seymour Hersh that she had been aware of her husband's arms-dealing activities and his involvement with Ben-Menashe: "Nick would try to tell me stuff [about the arms sales] and I said I didn't want to know," Fielding said. "I left him because of it."

When she left Davies in 1985, Fielding took copies of several letters that appear directly to implicate him as an arms dealer. A letter to Ora Ltd at Davies's Streatham address (15 January 1985) from a Haifa firm, Ziniuk & Michlin Ltd, discusses the sale to Ora of 800 used Berettas for $50. Another letter (29 May 1985) from Armtec International Inc, a supplier in Columbus, Ohio, USA, offers 30 new 155 Howitzer guns with ammunition for $1.2 million. William Johnson, an Armtec executive, confirmed to the *Eye* that he had met Nick Davies and Ari Ben-Menashe back in 1985, and that the purpose had indeed been to deal in Howitzer guns.

Another Ohio firm, Custom Camo, which specialised in police and SWAT equipment, wrote to Davies (31 May 1985) to say that it "was really great meeting you in person and spending a few days with you." The letter went on to mention Nigerian interest in an F-104 and also said that the writer was "looking forward to seeing Ari again. Give him my best and don't be surprised if the rascals go for the F-104." Another letter (22 July 1989), from the Ora Group (now operating from Davies's new residence in the Elephant and Castle) to the Sri Lankan president discusses the proposed sale of five Israeli C-130 E transport aircraft to the Sri Lankan Air Force for $9 million each.

A British journalist who tracked Nicholas Davies down in Harare, where he has been covering the Commonwealth Conference for the MIRROR, *put various allegations to him about arms dealing activities. Davies was shocked to hear that a book containing such assertions had been published and denied them flatly.*

Both the Hersh book and the Ben-Menashe manuscript claim that back in 1986, Davies, Ben-Menashe himself, and Mirror Group publisher Robert Maxwell, a self-styled intimate of the Israeli cabinet, were involved in a disinformation exercise, the purpose of which was to undermine the *Sunday Times*'s story about Israeli technician Mordecai Vanunu and his revelations that Israel had secretly developed a nuclear weapons capability.

Unfortunately for Vanunu, the man representing his interests to various newspapers in Europe and the US, a freelance journalist named Oscar E. Guerrero, approached Davies with copies of photographs that Vanunu had taken of the interior of the Israeli nuclear plant at Dimona. Davies tipped off Ben-Menashe, who joined Davies for a meeting with Maxwell in London.

Maxwell ordered his staff to deliver Vanunu's photographs to the Israeli embassy (a fact confirmed in the Hersh book by Mike Molloy), and the *Sunday Mirror* went to work on rubbishing the *Sunday Times* story, suggesting that it might be "a hoax, or even something more sinister — a plot to discredit Israel."

However, Ben-Menashe goes further with his allegations against Davies and says that Davies tracked down Vanunu's whereabouts in London and passed this information to Ben-Menashe, as a result of which Vanunu was lured to Rome by another Mossad operative and from there to Israel, where he is presently serving a lengthy prison sentence.

Fleet Street's in-fighting over the Vanunu affair is bound to flare up again — watch this space.

London City Airport

Just say yes

THE VIGOUR with which the European environment commissioner Carlo Ripa di Meana ordered the British Government to halt seven different transport projects could not be in greater contrast to the behaviour of the inspectors, appointed by the Government, to hold a public inquiry into London City Airport.

Quite by coincidence, they have reacted to the three questions put to them exactly as the Government wanted.

They were asked to allow the extension of the runway so that jet planes — which the residents had once been assured would never fly from there — could do so. The inspectors said yes.

They were asked to allow a new cheap bridge to be built across the Thames to link up with a new road and serve the airport with millions of customers, despite the damage it would do to shipping. The inspectors said yes.

They were also asked if they would permit a heliport at Cannon Street, where the noise would disturb the money markets and interfere with the concentration of the men in braces who peer at screens all day. They said no, agreeing that it was a "particularly sensitive location".

The inspectors did, however, make a timid suggestion on an issue not quite in their remit. They said that although they had not been asked for their opinion, they thought the Government might reconsider its refusal to put the new road in a tunnel under Oxleas Wood, which has been untouched by humans for 8,000 years. The Government refused — and Signor Ripa di Meana promptly told it to stop work on the East London river crossing through the woods or he'd slap an injunction on Malcolm Rifkind, transport secretary.

At first sight the Government's original refusal appears puzzling. After all, the extra £10 million needed would have been a small price to pay for the gratitude of environmentalists and the electoral kudos in Eltham (held by Peter Bottomley, former junior transport minister with a majority of 6,460) and Woolwich, which John Cartwright of the SDP (as was) held with a majority of only 1,937.

But road experts think it is not as simple as that. The road over the bridge, and from the bridge to the woods, has six lanes; the road through the woods only four. So if the road goes into a cutting, open to the sky, it will be fairly easy in a few years' time to decide that it must be widened to meet increased demand from juggernauts and wipe out much of what remains of the wood. But it would be more difficult, and expensive, to wide a tunnel. So the Government wants the road open on top.

What will happen now — as anti-Europeans in the Conservative Party rally to tell Brussels to hop it — remains to be seen. But the key to all this is the lengthening of the City Airport runway. When the airport was proposed, locals were assured by Mowlem, the developer, and the London Docklands Development Corporation, it would be for friendly, old-fashioned propeller planes that were small and didn't make much noise.

There were plenty of sceptics who argued that the airport could not be viable on such a basis. They were brushed aside. Mowlem, which has spent £36 million on the project and plans to spend another £7 million to extend the runway, says that it cannot break even until the number of people using it rises from the present 200,000 a year to 500,000 or 600,000, which should be achieved by 1994 or 1995.

Meanwhile the choice of a cheap, box girder bridge has shocked people who preferred the far more elegant design by Santiago Calatrava, the Spanish architect, which was backed by the Royal Fine Art Commission. It has also angered the London Rivers Association which says that the central span of less than 200 metres will force the Port of London Authority to operate a one-way system for large vessels and will increase the risk of collisions.

The Government may well end up in the European Court and the battle over the river crossing and the road through the woods is not over yet — not by a long four-lane or even six-lane road.

In the City

IVAN FALLON, deputy editor of the *Sunday Times*, has always been in love with the rich and famous, particularly their highly enviable lifestyles.

The not insubstantial rewards of journalism are not quite enough when confronted by the mansions, yachts and executive jets of those he fetes and fawns over. The envy glands were also perhaps further agitated because of the millionaire status achieved by his younger brother Padraic through serving Sir Patrick Sergeant at the *Euromoney* altar.

When not telephoning captains of industry for titbits of information and/or reasons to puff their latest deal or wit and wisdom in his City comment column, Fallon would be namedropping about his City friends.

Friends like Lord Hanson, whose hand, after years of feeding, he has now decided to bite on discovering how the predatory peer put him firmly in the Hanson pocket. Friends like conman Mohamed Fayed. Friends like ex-con Ernest Saunders. And friends like the brothers Saatchi, whose advertising feats and business acumen he glowingly described shortly before they headed down the tubes.

So Hutchinson was taking no risks when it commissioned Fallon to write *Billionaire*, the biography of the great Anglo-French financier, philanthropist and democrat Sir James Goldsmith. For Goldsmith too had joined the list of Fallon favourites about whom the *Sunday Times* could be relied upon to gush uncritically. After all, they, like Fallon, would not want to "spend years fighting... through the courts" with the super-litigious jolly green giant.

Not that the reader would assume that when he starts his near 500-page journey. The preface refers to how Goldsmith was told this would "not be an approved biography"; that it would "undoubtedly contain material and comment that would be disagreeable to him"; and that he "would not be able to alter a word".

Goldsmith accepted. He knew his man. Two years later he read the manuscript and "made no attempt to persuade me to change or alter any of the passages which he must have found offensive or painful".

Not that there are exactly chapters full of these. Those passages of criticism that exist mostly refer to Goldsmith's relationships with his wives, mistresses and children. Even the faithful Fallon choked on that.

Instead there is a chorus of praise in which inconvenient or inconsistent facts and unflattering incidents are glossed over or, more often, simply ignored. The tone of admiration soars ever higher to the tune of Goldsmith's cashcading offshore bank balance. By the time Fallon comes to describe Goldsmith's Mexican Xanadu he is positively drooling.

Not surprisingly, the list of those who helped compile this objective litany of achievements is short to the point of invisibility on those the paranoid Goldsmith would see as enemies or Soviet stooges or both.

The "same old anti-Goldsmith material" published by *Private Eye* over the years is dismissed in its entirety — except where it is said to be wrong. All that was right is omitted.

Among the matters overlooked is Goldsmith's withdrawal and payment of £35,000 towards the *Eye*'s legal costs in settlement in particular of a libel action brought over a 1980 article concerning share dealings in his French master company Générale Occidentale and their disclosure in compliance with the Companies Act. During the course of that action

AN INTERESTING but surely untrue BCCI rumour is that the Bank of Crooks, Cocaine & Impostors may have facilitated an indirect investment by none other than Saddam Hussein in his favourite TV station, CNN. The story goes that about five years ago Saddam was looking to make a $50-100 million US media investment at about the time CNN owner Ted Turner was looking for finance. It seems BCCI or its money laundering associate Capcom Financial Services may have acted as a conduit for an Iraqi investment in United Cable Television bonds. UCT was controlled by Tele-Communications, one of the major shareholders in Turner Broadcasting. What remains to be seen is whether any of the UCTV bond proceeds went into TBS.

Goldsmith declared that he was in the habit of destroying company documents "shortly after receipt". He had obviously forgotten about what Fallon describes as the "complex but highly efficient system which enabled him to produce a particular report or a piece of paper instantly".

Mentioned though only to be derided is the detailed investigation into Goldsmith carried out by Fallon's then *Sunday Times* colleague Charles Raw who, unlike Fallon, was seemingly "determined to expose him as a share manipulator, a liar and worse". "Not worth the investigative efforts Raw put into it", "impenetrable" and "deemed to be unpublishable" concludes Fallon, omitting to say that the Raw articles were published by *Private Eye* in 1985 after the *Sunday Times* chickened out.

Yet what Raw detailed, subsequently unchallenged, was a long-term pattern of unusual share deals involving Générale Occidentale which netted up to £8 million for Goldsmith, his family trusts and companies. No word of such transactions sullies the Fallon pages.

Similarly he detunes the significance and extent of Goldsmith's interlocking relationship with Slater Walker, revealed by Raw, at the time Jim Slater fell from grace in 1975 threatening to take Goldsmith with him.

Fallon also "forgets" Raw's revelation of the 500-page report by French court-appointed accountants into the 1968 takeover of the Societé Générale Fonciere bank which alleged that assets had been "liberated", the shares of a Goldsmith company grossly overvalued and GO inflated by "financial manipulation".

Also missing from the fearless Fallon's warts and all treatment are such significant matters as:

- The £700,000 payment made to settle a claim for "misrepresentation" over the 1973 sale of a Goldsmith company-owned Dutch bank.
- The 1977 dispute between Goldsmith and Tiny Rowland over £870,000 Rowland claimed was owed Lonrho over their abandoned supposed joint bid to buy Beaverbrook Newspapers.
- Goldsmith's business ally Charles Keating, currently facing fraud charges and investigations following the $2 billion collapse of Lincoln Savings & Loan.

Fallon does deal with Goldsmith's campaigns against his press opponents. Indeed he even concedes that *Private Eye* won its war with Goldsmith — one of the few things on which he and Goldsmith disagree. But the coverage is heavily sanitized.

For example, Goldsmith's courteous reaction to critic Barbara Conway — "I live for the day when people like you choke on your own vomit" — is strangely overlooked. Goldsmith's crazed attack on *Daily Express* photographer Bill Lovelace in a Paris street — glasses broken, ribs bruised, camera damaged — is described as "a trivial incident". No doubt he would have the same reaction if a *Sunday Times* man was similarly treated.

IT SEEMS all may not be well at brokers Hitchens Harrison. There are unconfirmed rumours of six-figure losses made by a now ex-employee outsmarted by a major client who detected the favourite City pastime of "front running" on his deals.

Fallon concludes his paean of praise with Goldsmith's self-assessment: "The greatest critic should be yourself." As with most of what Goldsmith says, he does not disagree. After all that was certainly not the role either author or publisher coveted.

"From the earliest moment he could remember Jimmy Goldsmith had nurtured one particular ambition: to be rich, to be a millionaire." Sentiments his faithful Boswell clearly understands only too well. In his *Sunday Telegraph* days Fallon was considerably less flattering about Goldsmith, who in return dubbed him a "Bobby-sox journalist". He is still one today — but they have to be Gucci.

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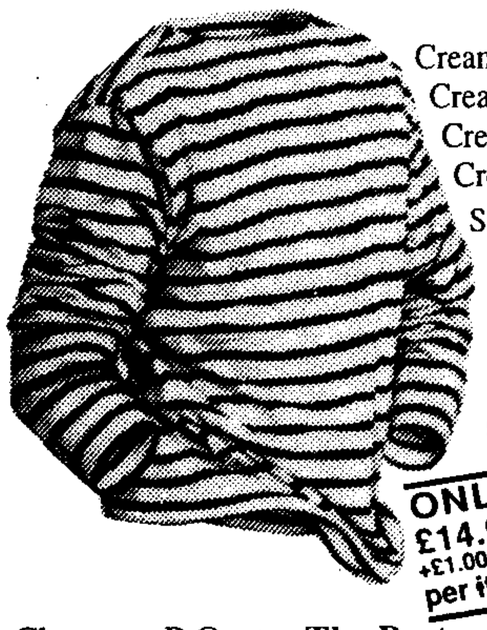

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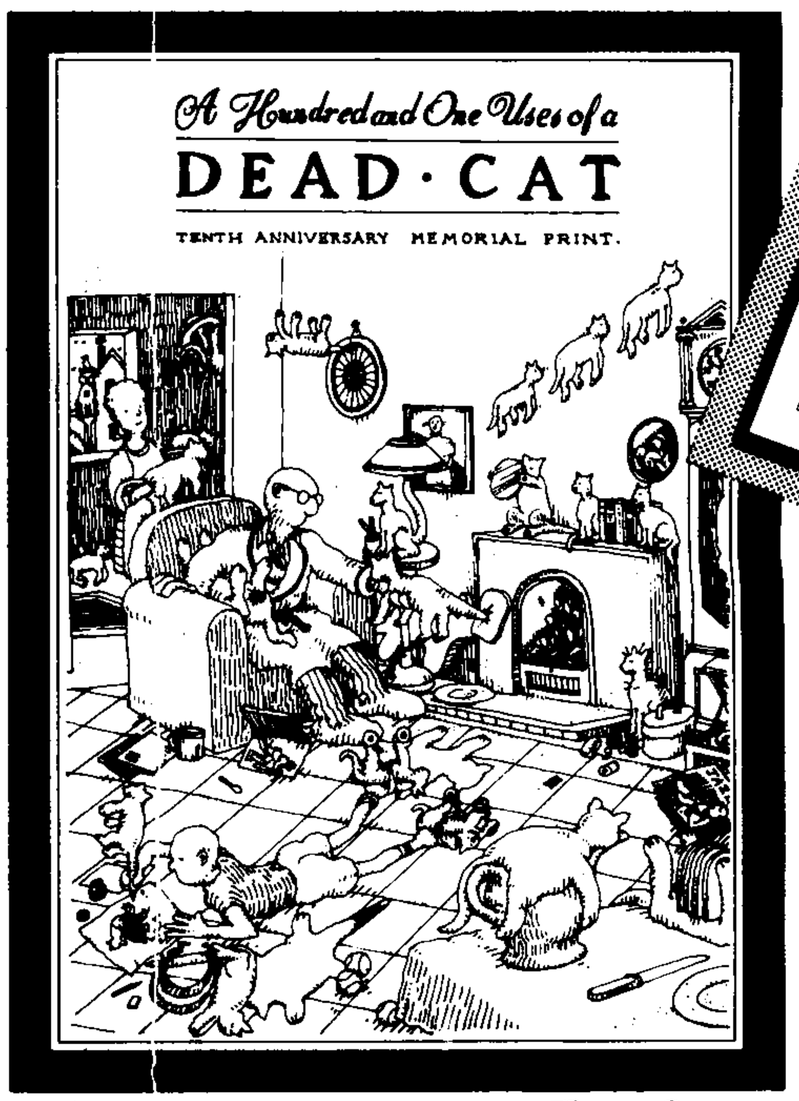

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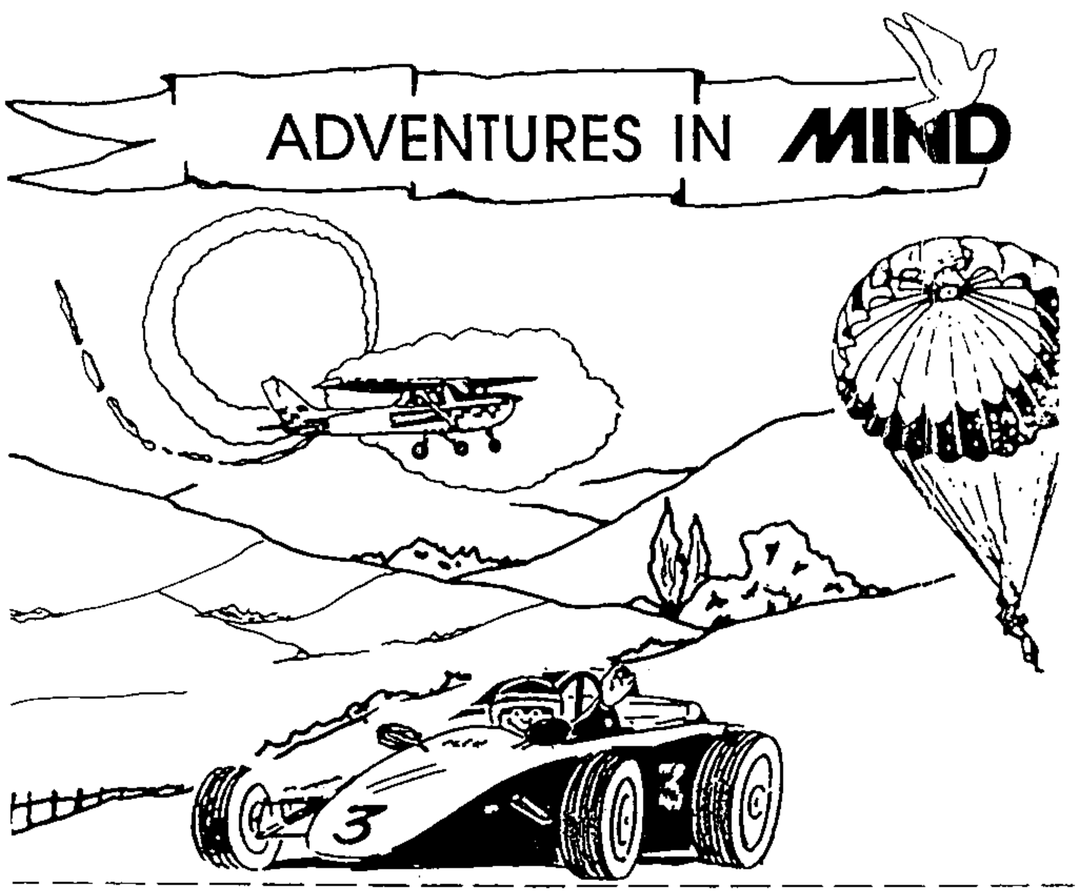

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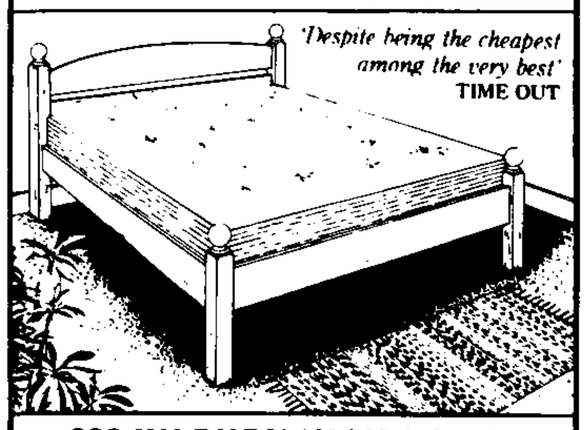

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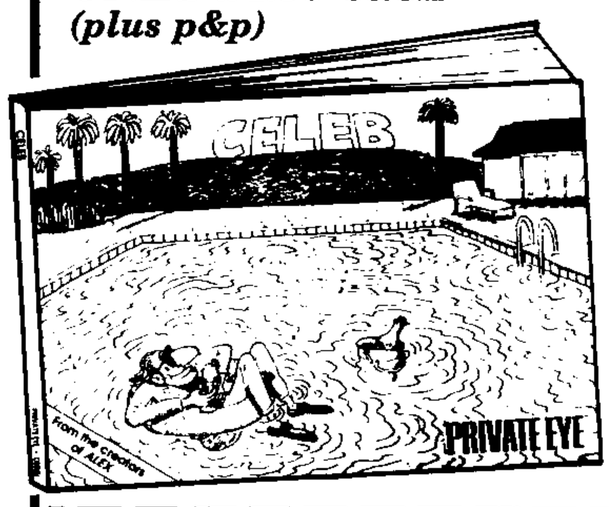

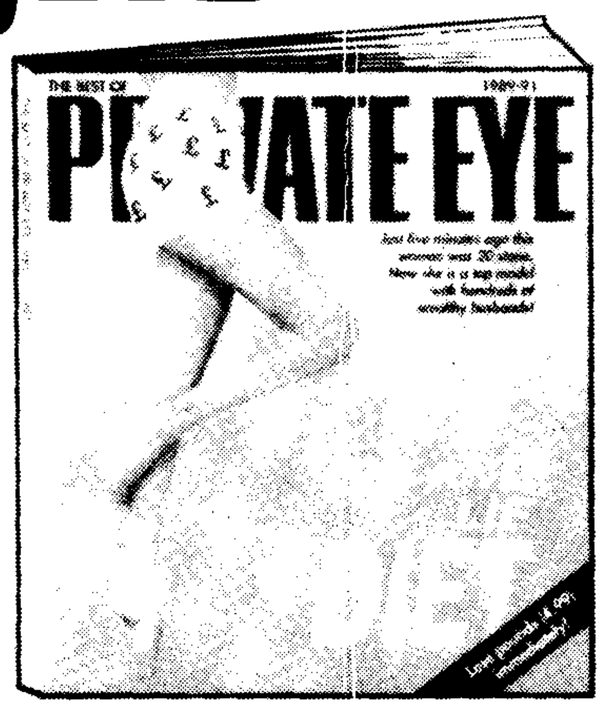

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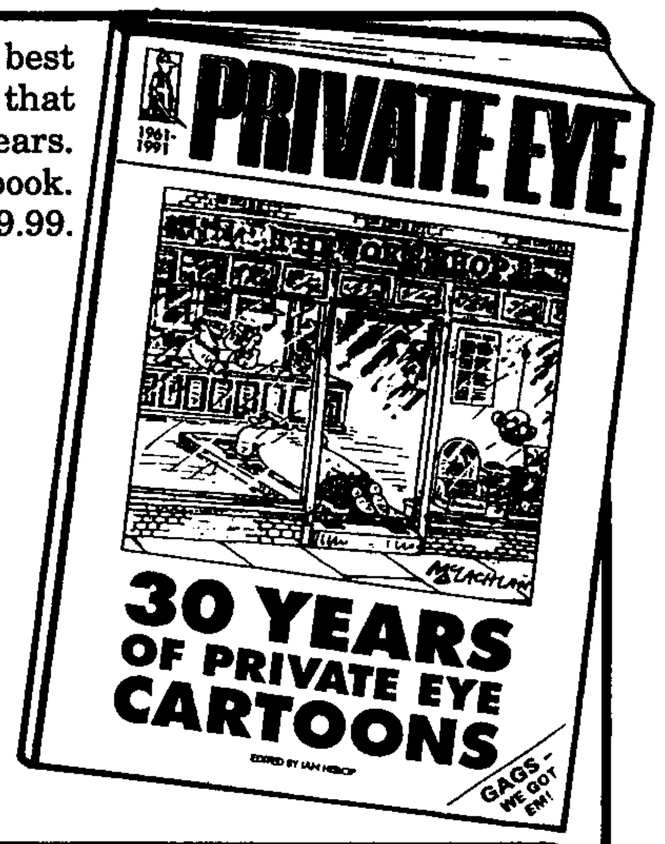

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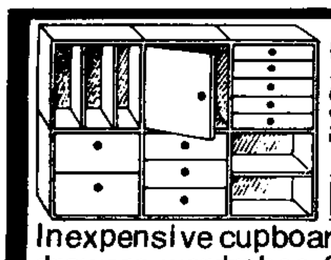

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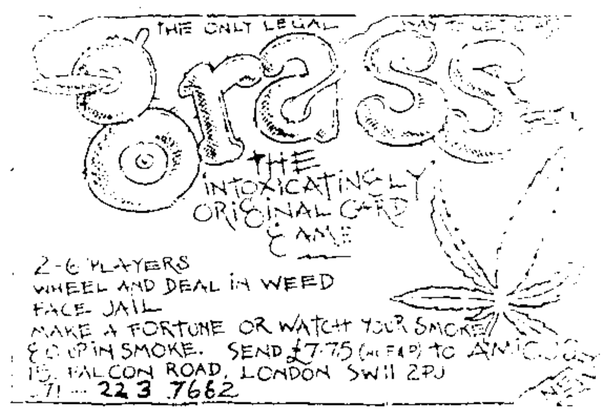
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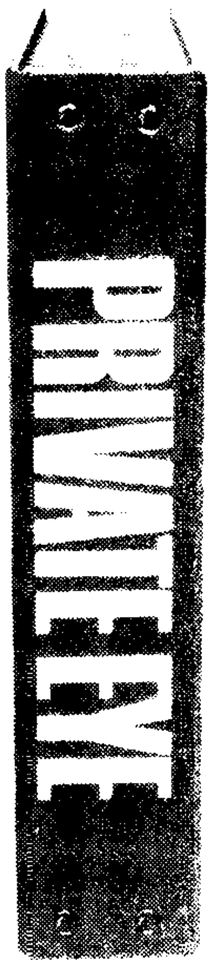

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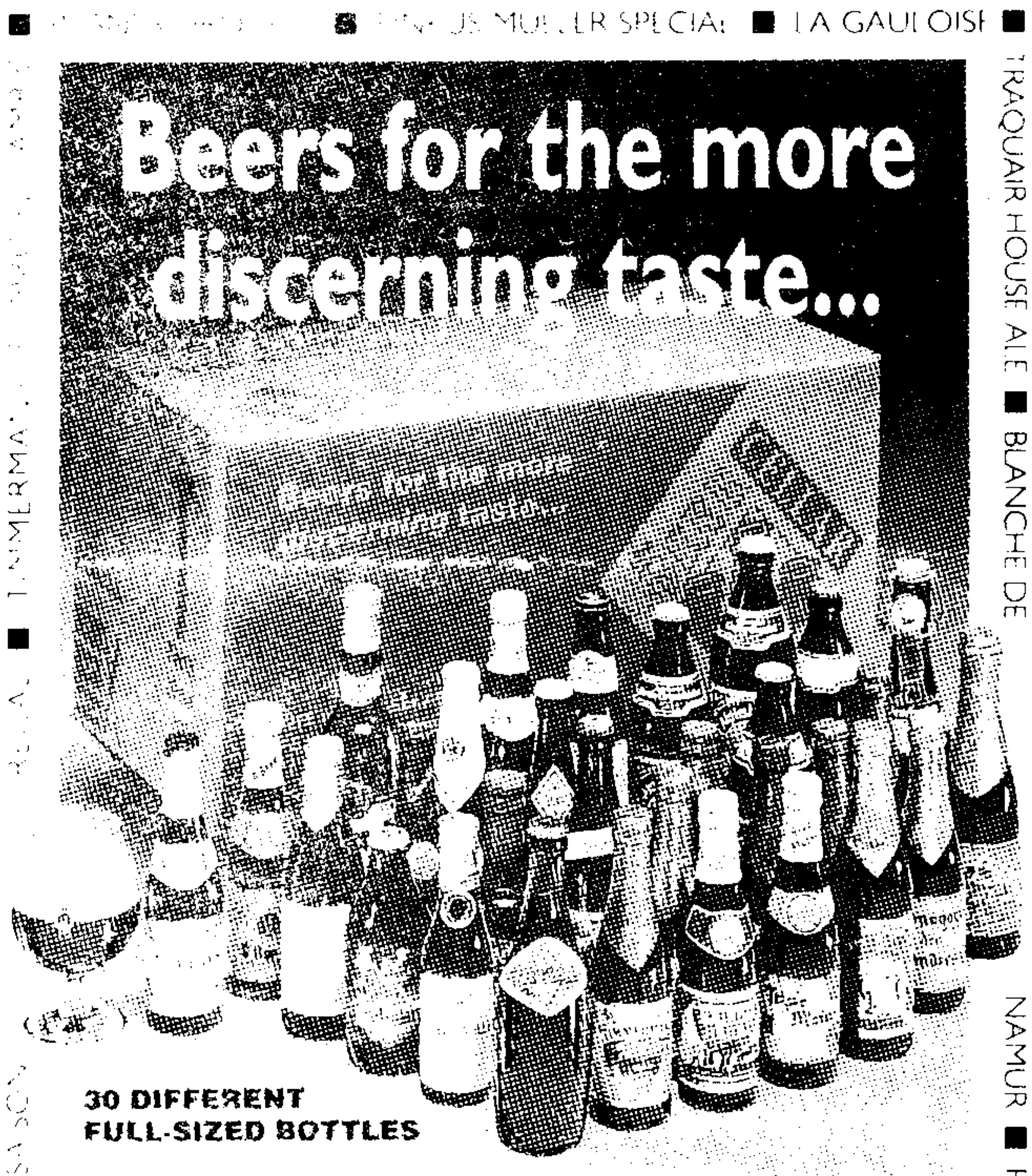

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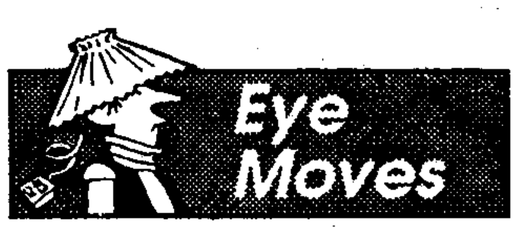

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ANTHROPOLOGIST AND ARTIST need funds. Chimpanzee rainforest conservation project Uganda. 0273 205886.

TRAINED FILM-MAKER desperately needs funds for project to cross Africa. Screen and book credits in return, all donations acknowledged. Box 0679.

MEDICAL STUDENT grantless needs financial assistance. Box 0779.

OXFORD UNDERGRADUATES need £1200 to pay college fine incurred following riotous party. Messrs Appavoo and Marsden, LMH, Oxford.

SONGWRITERS NEED financial backing. Percentage etc. offered to genuine backers. Jamie 0534-67101.

GIRL DESPERATELY needs £1,500 to save her parents from civil war in Croatia. Please help! Box 0879.

BROKERS MEN at door. Large amount of money required to keep family and home together. No guarantees but friend for life! Box 0979.

S.O.S. Scottish lass genuinely needs £700 for course fees. Please help. Box 9979.

THE CORRECTIVE PARTY need £1 million for political campaign to crush bigotry. Please donate something. 58 Eardley Crescent, London SW5 9JZ.

SURGEON NEEDS financial help during two years research into congenital heart disease. All help acknowledged. Box 8277.

POSTGRADUATE — grantless! £3000 needed to complete MEd. Donations gratefully received. Box 1079.

PSYCHIATRIC NURSE going mad over debts. Needs £5K - gifts only. Box 1179.

ARTIST — SERIOUS dedicated painter in dire straits to meet material/studio costs. All letters answered. Prints/slides of work available. All help/sponsorship acknowledged. Box 1279.

SINGER/SONGWRITER with producer has spent two years and £15,000 to produce 8 songs. Needs investment and/or manager to get major record deal here/abroad. Box 1379.

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GRADUATE NEEDS £2000 to pay off debts. Thanks. Box 8279.

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TALL NORTH Lancashire male (26) seeks wicked woman for fun and laughter. Box 5879.

ARE YOU female, unattached, professional, goodlooking, good fun, under 35 and wanting to share and enjoy life with a similar male? Please get in touch. Box 6079.

TWO PIQUANT spiritual men invite two slim ladies for dinner over in Boulogne. Photos please. Box 6179.

CAPABLE MALE, 30, seeks instruction from well-endowed female mind. Box 6279.

YOU REPLIED to Box 3875 (Paisley postmark) surprise, surprise. I'm 5'9" tall good-looking and single! I therefore await your further reply with interest.

OXBRIDGE GRADUATE, 32, prospective Tory MP, seeks educated, attractive and buxom girl (25-31) to fall in love with. Box 6379.

A BRIGHT intelligent attractive(?) widow mid-40s — ever hopeful that somewhere there is an attractive available man, similar age, caring, fun, who could share theatres, music, walks, etc. Any hope. Box 6479.

HANDSOMELY RICH, tall slim easygoing unattached sensual, seeks attractive humorous lascivious lady for mutual delight, temporary or permanent. Photo/cv. Box 6579.

TWO WITTY, charming, attractive, professional males, late 20s, seek two lovely intelligent girls 25-30, for evenings out and larks, London area. Box 6679.

PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN, male, slim 45 married, needs light-hearted London lady married or single for occasional afternoon fun rehearsals. Photograph with reply appreciated. All letters answered. Box 6779.

SINGLE PROFESSIONAL woman, 36, too busy to seek out humorous, intelligent male company, but available for occasional outings, uncomplicated fun and cuddles, North East. Box 6879.

HANDSOME PROFESSIONAL man, 37, married, seeks sensuous lady for exciting affair. Oxfordshire, Bucks, Northants. Box 6979.

SINGLE MAN, 30, seeks lady, 20-40, for relationship. London/South East. Box 7079.

CARING PLUMP professional woman (30) seeks successful older man for mutual TLC. London. Photo preferred. Box 7179.

ATTRACTIVE, AMIABLE female graduate, 30, 5'7", solvent slim and sporting, seeks tall enthusiastic similar man for winter warmth. London. Box 7279.

MARRIED MAN, 54, attractive, North London, frigid marriage, seeks single woman attractive sexy 40-55 for passionate relationship. Photo, phone no. please. Discretion assured. Box 7379.

OXFORD. PRETTY, petite female, 5ft, 31. I'm natural, warm, soh, seeking similar male to share arts, countryside, pubs, food, laughter, life. You'll be attractive, open, outgoing, imaginative, n/s. Bearded/creative types especially welcome! Photo please. No adulterers. Box 7479.

VERY ATTRACTIVE humorous lively designer seeks similar genuine male for fun nights out and lively weekends. 27-42. Interests and photos please. No weirdos, werewolves or couch-potatoes. Manchester/Merseyside/Cheshire. Box 7579.

3RD SPEAR HOLDER on the right seeks a romantic lead. Attractive professional man, slim, 30, looking for leading lady, 24 to 33, for years of award winning performances. Enjoys theatre, classical/contemp music, walking, chocolate cake and sensual massage in front of a log fire. Bonham-Carter considered. Stratford/Midlands. Box 7679.

SENSITIVE, CARING woman seeks decent man to love and make me happy. I/m 26 and slightly crazy! I like: emotive cinema, smoking, drinking, wild music and Stephen King. Will you take a chance? Photo please. Box 9579.

9½ WEEKS until Christmas and this handsome, slim male 33 seeks that elusive special girl to share passion and pleasure, warm up winter nights and make long hot summers swelter. Photo appreciated. Midlands. Box 9679.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 31, slight fitness fanatic, seeks independent attractive sporty female to share future adventures, life and love. Photo appreciated. Box 2079.

SINGLE SUCCESSFUL sensitive sensual slightly cynical thirties scientist seeks independent lady sybarite. Surrey/Sussex. Box 2179.

TALL ATTRACTIVE witty charming blonde, 30, seeks tall professional adventurous male, Cambs/Lincs/Leicestershire. Box 2279.

CULTURED LIVELY attractive woman, 40, likes sailing, skiing, travel, theatre needs affectionate goodhumoured successful man for laughter, cuddles and lasting intimacy. Southeast/London. Box 2379.

ENGLISHMAN WITH own home in South West England needs wife. Any nationality, must be good homemaker. Box 2479.

NON SMOKING vegetarian round lady, young sixties, recent art graduate, seeks slightly eccentric professor type for life enrichment. Midlands. Box 2579.

INTELLIGENT, ATTRACTIVE happy woman (34) warm and easygoing, into travel, music, outdoors, seeks similar n/s man with heart, brain and sense of humour. Photo please — returned. North/anywhere. Box 2679.

HAPPILY DIVORCED professional male, 33, tall/slim, seeking adventurous female for intimate discreet friendship. North East. ALA. Box 2779.

COUNTRY-LOVING FEMALE, 28, looking for a 6ft+ attractive, solvent, hedonistic male, to share haystack! Box 2879.

DEAR SANTA: I know it's early but this year please put me down for a beautiful intelligent sincere educated sexy woman 25-35 any colour any nationality who I promise to love and cherish. Thank you. Box 2979.

ATTRACTIVE CITY broker, well-travelled, 6'5" seeks attractive considerate female graduate or professional with good sense of humour for romantic assignations. Must be outward going and not prudish. Box 3079.

ATTRACTIVE LADY, 30, successful, adventurous, stylish, tall, slim and blonde. I would love to meet a happy, wealthy, extrovert man also unmarried, sporty, and who loves to live life to the full. View friendship, long term relationship, marriage. Box 3179.

TALL ATTRACTIVE professional man, separated, seeks slim intelligent woman. Objective fun. London. Box 3279.

SLIGHTLY DISORGANISED, lively, caring, professional N. London woman (late 30s) seeks unattached compatible man. No bimbos, wimps please. Box 3379.

WOMAN, YOUNGISH, 47, good-humoured, educated by dilettantish, seeks companionship — perhaps more eventually — of amiable, wise, oldish fogey. Thames Valley/anywhere. Box 3479.

MARRIED MAN, 36, content but unfulfilled, seeks lady in similar position for very discreet relationship. Box 3579.

SEXY NURSE wanted, young, female, by tall healthy attractive young affluent company director, aged 52, for discreet midweek meetings and travel abroad. Qualifications 38-26-38 or similar! Write with photo; mine in return. All letters answered. Box 3679.

GOLDSPARKLE! Love you.

YOU, YES YOU!! Are you bored with the social bullshit? I am. Handsome single man needs woman with a spark. Let's try and raise things above the inevitable. Age, area immaterial. Phone, photo please. Box 3879.

INTELLIGENT, ATTRACTIVE warmhearted woman (31) with sense of humour and fun, seeks man of same ilk to while away those winter evenings and weekends (Oxford/London area). Photo appreciated. Box 3979.

ELIGIBLE ASIAN bachelor, professional executive, seeks good natured attractive caring lady 26-38 for long term relationship. NW. photo appreciated. Box 3779.

PASSIONATE LOVEJOY seeks female partner with keen eye and cute tail. Send picture for immediate appraisal. Box 11177.

CONSIDERATE, SUCCESSFUL, attractive male, 45, 5'11", whose family ties are eased by material success, a sense of humour, and a compliant partner, seeks a female friend who also needs occasionally to escape from the rigours of life. Box 7277.

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Eye Love Reader

INEXPERIENCED MALE (26) seeks initiation. Box 7779.

GRADUATE, 27, professional, seeks female company and cuddles. Age/looks unimportant (although photo appreciated). Home counties/London. Box 7879.

LONDON WOMAN (27) graduate, tall, humorous seeks witty professional man. Cynics and smokers welcome. Box 7979.

ADVENTUROUS WOMAN required for joint business venture and warm intimacy, in Southend, one hour from London. Photo. Box 8079.

TALL, ATTRACTIVE, lively professional lady 28 seeks unattached professional n/s man with sense of humour for possible romantic entanglement. Manchester. Box 8579.

CAN ANYONE convince this warm attractive fun-loving male film-maker (41) that intelligent slim unattached women (under 40) exist in London? Photo please. Box 8679.

COUNTRYSIDE-BASED ex-Govt scientist, single 50, looking for suitable female soulmate. Box 8779.

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER, smoking, eating meat, losing marbles, in large Lincolnshire country house with Landrover and mortgage, seeks slim, attractive sane female 27-36. Box 8879.

MALE, 23, slim, fit, handsome, tall, seeks mature (35+) voluptuous glamorous intelligent lady for discreet uncomplicated lust. Sensuality a must; offers massage etc. West Wales. Box 8979.

ERUDITE, CARING, successful world-traveller offers to enrich life of slim, attractive nymphomaniac 18-30 with exciting travel, indulgent shopping and generous career support. Photo and phone number appreciated. Box 9079.

SALTY SEA-DOG, 30, with own teeth, dog, boat and salt, seeks non-sugary sexy girl under 30 with brains, beauty and wit. Preferred activities: sailing, drinking, arguing, Sundays in bed and increasing my overdraft. I couldn't handle Sharons, wimp-ettes or illiterates (innit) but am otherwise open to suggestions. Box 9179.

HANDSOME AMERICAN businessman/record producer, 36, 5'11", trim, financially successful, sexy, vibrant, easygoing, strong but goodhearted, responsible, has nice W1 London flat to share rent free with one warm, sensuous, busty, leggy woman. Photo/phone a must. Box 9279.

BEARISH BACHELOR (33), own cave etc, seeks fat jolly lady (25-40) interested in history of art/architecture. Perhaps French or Italian speaker. I am an unrich professional (English), cripplingly intelligent, talented, handsome and modest. London. Box 9379.

TALL DARK television producer, 40, suddenly single, wants reminding what life is really for. London. Interesting letter, photo please. Box 4879.

NYMPHOMANIAC BLONDE short fat slut. 33. (55".45".55") wishes to marry titled aristocrat. Box 4378.

HANDSOME NORTHANTS, graduate, 29, with s.o.h. and wit, married but otherwise normal, seeks similar female for the usual cliches. Box 1879.

CAN YOU become more adventurous, more radical, more fun as you get older? This man believes so, and is looking for a little adventuress to explore with. Box 1979.

ORIENTAL LADY wanted (30/40) by professional English gentleman. Photo and phone number essential. Box 9479.

GREENISH EXTROVERT 6'0" athletic happily married male, 43, well travelled, seeks environmentally friendly meetings. Wife approves. Shropshire/Herefordshire. Box 4979.

MUDDY WATERS seeks Bessie Smith (in North London!?) Box 5079.

WOMAN, 53, seeks academic, employed, intellectual, similarly aged, solvent man; of robust and optimistic disposition; with literary, philosophical, theological concerns. Box 4079.

FEMALE, OXFORD — truly, madly, deeply, intelligently, humorously, artistically, hesitantly... quickly! Box 4179.

ANTIGRAVITATIONAL travelling Dutch eroticist seeks positive woman to practise passion with. Box 4279.

JOURNALIST, 28, seeks intelligent and pretty young lady for cuddles and cultural fun, who loves The Sound of the Suburbs, but lives somewhere more interesting, preferably Central London. Photo please. Box 4379.

OXFORD/READING: genuinely nice chap (25), own house, seeks slim lady for romantic dinners, movies, and picnics. Photo appreciated. Box 4479.

HAPPY DEPENDABLE affluent single guy 40 non-smoker loves all the good social graces but relaxes doing DIY and walking his dogs would like to meet similar lady 25-40 and living in Thames Valley area. Box 4579.

SUCCESSFUL, CONTENT, 35, male travelling extensively UK and Europe, seeks interesting female company, food, conversation, fun — uncomplicated but sincere — relieve tedium long evenings posh hotels. Photo appreciated. Box 4679.

GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL man, 31, cul-de-sac relationship seeks genuine lady for sensible caring long term friendship. Box 4779.

EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD-LOOKING tall hunkish upmarket humorous educated safely married male 43 seeks genuinely attractive 30s female for discreet relationship. London. Box 12778.

ELIGIBLE BACHELOR, 31, tall, strong, handsome and kind, seeks pretty, blonde, public-school girlfriend, 18-24 (send photo). Box 9576.

WIDOWED SOCIAL worker, 51, fond of gardening, books, architecture, seeks intelligent woman, thirties or forties, for mutual comfort. West Midlands. Box 5179.

STALLION, thoroughbred palomino. Young, fit and willing. Beautiful nature. Needs experienced female trainer for afternoon gallops. London, South East. Photo and training schedule to Box 5279.

TALL PROFESSIONAL male, 39, recently moved Birmingham, seeks slim, non-smoking lady guide, 20-35, for exploration and pursuit of fun, good food, music, etc. Photo please. Box 5379.

FUN LOVING tycoon sought by intelligent young media lady who needs looking after. Genuine gentlemen with money, class and a good heart need only apply. Box 5479.

ATTRACTIVE ENGLISH lady, 34, wishes to meet tall, professional gentlemen including ethnic origin. Photos returned. NW/Manchester area. Box 5679.

CHIVALROUS, WARM and sincere (young) man, 35, interesting, intelligent and romantic. Seeks similar cheerful attractive girl 23-30 for hugs, laughs, adventures and possibly life? (me - rural E. Mids.) Swap a letter and photo? Box 5779.

TOMCAT
seeks pussy.
Box 5579.

MOST MEN shy away from tall elegant blondes who are successful. Wanted tall rugged educated gentleman 45-55 Berkshire area. Photograph please. Box 5979.

ATTRACTIVE SHAPELY sensuous woman media professional young 34 S.Yorks seeks romance laughter pleasure and excitement. Box 10379.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 37, good looks, sense of humour; seeks evenings out and/or weekends away with lovely lady (23-38) definitely with romance in mind. Discretion assured. Hants/London. Box 10479.

ASIAN MALE (20) very attractive, sexy, but shy, seeks attractive, sexy, slim female for daring fun times! N. West. Box 10579.

MALE? FORTYSOMETHING? indepedent? happy? full life? Except you're thinking about sharing again. I'm female and maybe? Could we just grin and be friends if we don't quite click? Photo please. Box 10679.

WE'VE WAITED too long for our eyes to meet across a crowded room. Me: Norwich, tall, attractive(?), PhD, traditionalist. Interest theatre, classical music, countryside. You: relaxed, equal, female! Box 10779.

MODERN FEMALE 35 (looks 25) gorgeous with magnetic blue eyes, intelligent, healthy, romantic, seeks an intelligent good-looking wealthy male 35+ for love and togetherness. Photo essential. Box 10879.

INTERMITTENT FEMALE partner desired by a travelling man (30) London/Oxford. Box 10979.

SELF MADE millionaire businessman 49, 5'10", good personality, conversation, welldressed, fit, seeks slim, attractive, privately educated, non-smoking 35-40 lady within/South M25. Photo, phone essential. Box 10179.

MELLOW, OCCASIONALLY inspired, slightly idiosyncratic, usually interesting 30ish man needs presentable female to improve inspirational output. Midlands/anywhere. Box 10279.

Replying to a PRIVATE EYE Box Number? Address your reply like this:

Box No .....
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6 CARLISLE STREET
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QUIET PROFESSIONAL male (27), single, interested in classical music, theatre, walking in the countryside, seeks kind female prepared to put up with his sense of humour. Tyneside. Box 11079.

BEAUTIFUL TALL slim Scottish girl 19 seeks kind humorous sincere professional guy for letters, laughs and who knows? Box 11179.

OXFORD POSTGRADUATE student, male, 26, good-looking, 4-wheels, ambitious yet sensitive, wide extracurricular interests including photography, hill-walking, piano. Social life restricted by thesis! Seeks attractive female (twenties, nationality unimportant) for more balanced existence. Photo (returnable) appreciated. Box 11279.

HANDSOME, ROMANTIC, caring male (25) seeks sweet, sexy female (pref: brunette) for company, excitement and anything else that might develop. Photo appreciated. ALA guaranteed. London and surrounds. Box 11379.

YOUNG CHAP available! Good-looking, slim, 5'8", dark hair, eyes — really nice bloke — needs looking after by a lady. Age, shape, size, colour immaterial. Actually I'm 37 but don't look it. SW/anywhere. Box 11479.

OLDER LADY, attractive, sensuous, understanding, sought by impecunious country gentleman (30s) for discreet friendship. Meet London. Box 11579.

FAMOUS FAMED Ebor graduate, 22, seeks bimbo for marriage. Box 11679.

VARIABLY OVERWEIGHT young buck (29) with own small pressure business, tired of meeting the wrong type of girl seeks intelligent amusing career type girlfriend for friendship, future and nights out in the Manchester/Cheshire area. Box 11779.

GORGEOUS BLONDE, many interests, seeks millionaire businessman to spoil her. Sense of humour. Box 11879.

RAZOR SHARP dry wit — gentle man seeks well groomed sexy cracker for everything. London home but works the world. Box 11979.

SPECIAL OFFER1 London/Surrey based, tall, attractive, intelligent, successful, professional, 41, individualistic with varied interests including music, travelling, theatre, films. Now available, but hurry: offer strictly limited! Box 12079.

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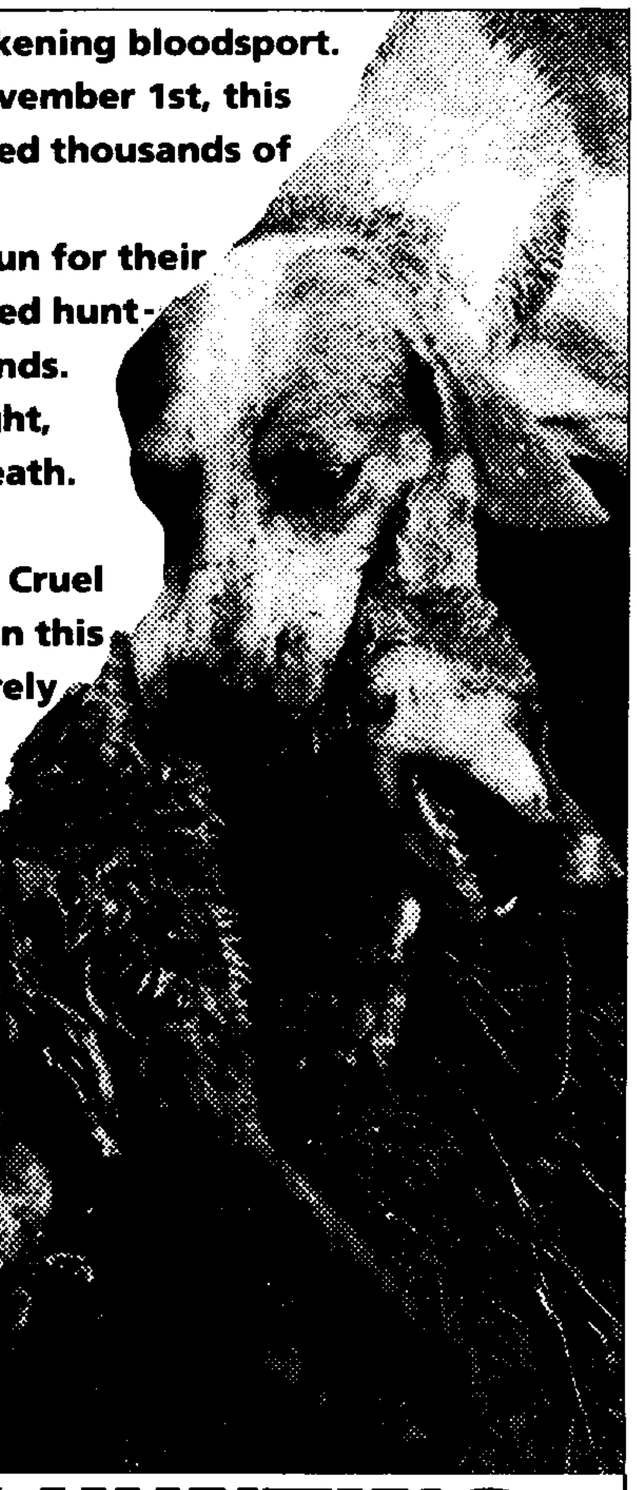

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No. 779
Friday
25 Oct '91

PRIVATE EYE

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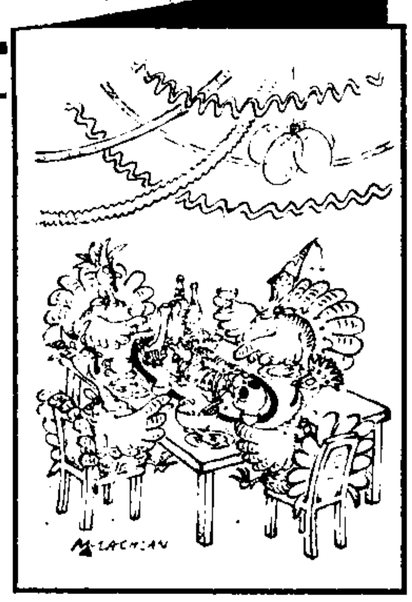

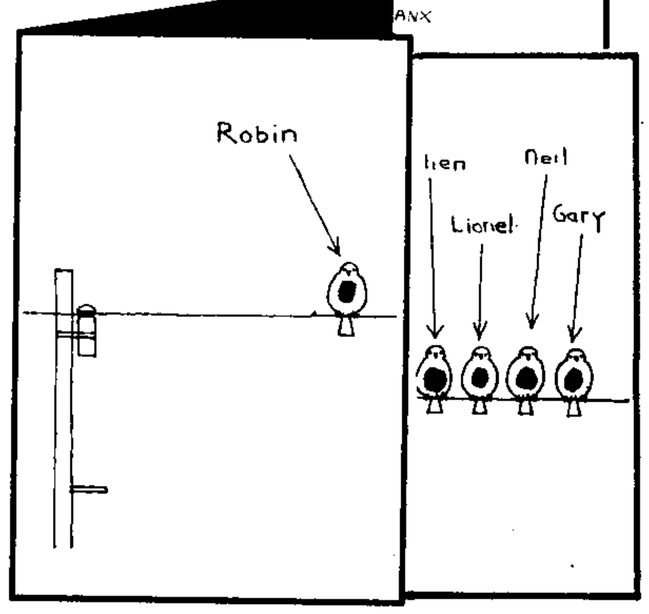

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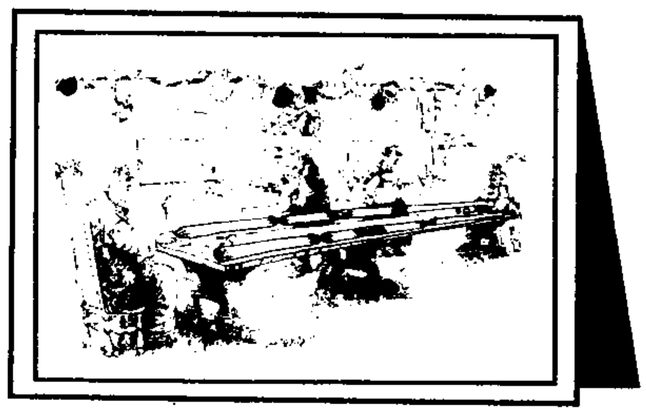

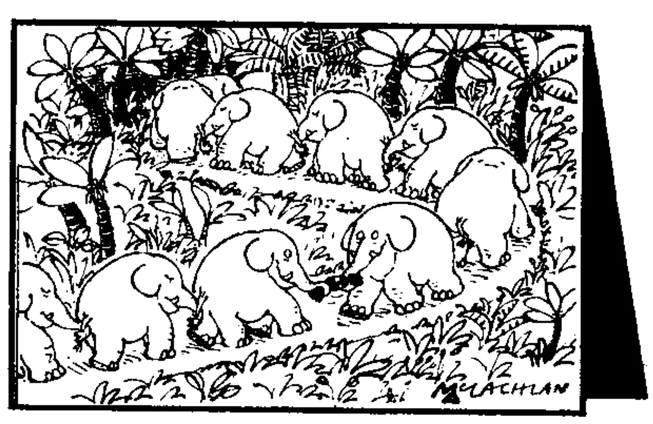

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